

**I DON'T CARE IF I EVER GET BACK: MARATHONS LASTING 20 OR MORE INNINGS**

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BIOGRAPHY

Back in 1986, before it became popular to do so, Phil Lowry argued passionately for asymmetrical ballparks in his book Green Cathedrals, stating that symmetrical cookie-cutter, ashtray, toilet bowl stadia were destroying the soul of the game.

During his research over the past 41 years into marathon games, Phil has contacted every national baseball association, Olympic baseball committee, major league team, minor league team, pro league, amateur association, and SABR chapter in every nation of the world, and additionally every high school coach, American Legion coach, college coach, high school state association, college league, baseball writer association, and umpire association in the US and Canada.

If you notice any games that are missing from the various listings here, please contact him at [plowry1176@aol.com](mailto:plowry1176@aol.com).

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- 1 Croix de Candlestick pin, with Croix de Candlestick on the top, SF logo in the middle, Veni Vidi Vixi on the bottom.
- 2 Photo showing 2:44 AM on clock, White Sox at Senators 22-inning Jun 12, 1967 game, New York Daily News, Jun 14, 1967, p. 32.
- 3 Photo showing exact moment at 2:44 AM when Paul Casanova hit the game-winning single to win the Senators 22-inning Jun 12, 1967 game, New York Daily News, Jun 14, 1967, p. 32.
- 4 Photo, Dodgers at Phillies 20-inning Jul 7, 1993 game, Philadelphia Inquirer or Philadelphia Daily News, Jul 9, 1993.
- 5 Collage of box scores of games lasting 20 or more innings.
- 6 Photo showing 10:50 PM on clock and scoreboard showing game entering 22nd inning (31st inning for the doubleheader) to break previous major league record for longest doubleheader, Giants at Mets 23-inning May 31, 1964 second game, New York Daily News or New York Times, Jun 1, 1964.
- 7 Box score, Robins at Braves 26-inning game, 1920.
- 8 Box score and scoresheet, "The Longest Game" packet, Rochester at Pawtucket 33-inning game, 1981, Sporting News.
- 9 Box score and news clipping, Tanaka Hospital vs. Light Manufacturing 45-inning game, 1983.
- 10 Press release issued Jul 15, 1988 by the San Antonio Missions of the Texas League, citing my research on baseball marathons and their 26-inning game, suspended after 25 innings on Jul 14, 1988.

"It is the mark of an instructed mind to rest satisfied with the degree of precision which the nature of the subject admits, and not to seek exactness when only an approximation of the truth is possible." --- Aristotle

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Baseball is thankfully free of artificial boundaries of time which confine other sports. This freedom helps to shape the unique magical charm that is an evening at the ballpark. Fans never know whether it will be a two-hour squeaker or whether they may be enchanted until past sunrise by the first-ever wild twelve-hour 46-inning slugfest.

In the bottom of the seventh, baseball fans world-wide stand up to sing Albert von Tilzer's music and Jack Norworth's lyrics for the 1908 baseball anthem, "Take Me Out to the Ball Game". When games go into extra innings, the song is sung again, with much more meaning, in the bottom of the 14th, bottom of the 21st, bottom of the 28th, etc.:

Take me out to the ball game,  
Take me out with the crowd,  
Buy me some peanuts and Cracker Jack,  
I don't care if I EVER get back.

## 2. WHY STUDY MARATHON EXTRA INNING GAMES?

For 41 years, I have been researching long baseball games lasting 20 or more innings, finishing after 1 AM local time, and taking more than 6 hours, ever since my father and I attended a 26-inning twi-night doubleheader at Forbes Field Aug 9, 1963. After a long rain delay, the first game took 15 innings. Roberto Clemente's RBI single ended the second game in the bottom of the 11th at 2:30 AM. The next day, we discovered that nobody at KDKA Radio or any Pittsburgh newspaper, indeed nobody in the entire world, could answer the question, "Is that the longest-ever night of baseball?"

For the purposes of this article, a marathon will be defined as a game lasting 20 or more innings. At first, I considered defining a marathon as a game lasting 26.2 innings or more, but I rejected that idea as impractical. Thus far, in my research since 1963, I have discovered 352 marathons. These games are hard to find. Leagues either keep no records, or keep track only of their longest game. The only known organization which keeps records of all marathons is the Texas League. A complete listing of all 352 can be found at Appendix 1. If you know of a marathon not listed in Appendix 1, please let me know via e-mail at plowry1176@aol.com. The evolution for the record for longest game by innings is tracked in Appendix 2. This article is available on the SABR website at [www.sabr.org](http://www.sabr.org).XXXXXX.

To my knowledge, nobody has ever before explored such questions as: What is the probability a game will go 10 innings, or 20 innings, or 30 innings, or 40 innings, or x number of innings? How often might we expect a marathon game of 20 or more innings, of 40 or more innings? What is the probability the 26-inning major league record will be broken this year? What is the probability the 33-inning minor league record will be broken in the next ten years? What is the probability the 45-inning "other" category (schools/amateur/international/women's) record will be broken in the next 75 years?

How long a wait would give us a 50% chance to see the 26-inning major league record broken, or a 95% chance to see the 33-inning minor league record broken, or a 99% chance to see the 45-inning "other" category record broken? Which is "rarer", the 26-inning major league record, the 33-inning minor league record, or the 45-inning "other" category record? In this article, we will answer all these questions.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: IN ALL NATIONS AND AT ALL LEVELS**

One of my research goals is to treat all levels of play and all countries equally. Baseball research has unfortunately failed to consider all the various levels and countries in which the game is played. If you ask baseball historians who hit the most triples in a season, they will reply Chief Wilson of the Pirates, with 36 triples in 1912, because they automatically assume you are asking about the major leagues. However, if you ask for the answer to the question for all of baseball, including Negro Leagues, minor leagues, high schools, colleges, American Legion and Babe Ruth League and town ball, Cuba and Japan and Italy and all other nations, I would guess no one has ever even asked the question, much less answered it.

I believe we must ask and answer such questions. My research is hopefully one small contribution towards taking a global approach to baseball research, in which all levels of competition and all nations of the world are given equal treatment.

### **4. JOE DI MAGGIO'S 56-GAME HITTING STREAK**

There are important parallels here between this research on the probability marathon games will occur, and research published in SABR and other baseball journals concerning the probability a batter may ever break Joe DiMaggio's 56-game 1941 major league or Joe Wilhoit's 69-game 1919 minor league (Western League) hitting streaks.

The 56-game major league streak is considered the prime example of a baseball event totally defying the laws of probability. The late Stephen Jay Gould once stated DiMaggio's streak is the "most extraordinary thing that has ever happened in sports". I hope these parallels can be further explored in the future.

### **5. LONGEST MARATHON NEVER PLAYED: 54 INNINGS IN IOWA**

The record for longest game has been increasing ever since the first baseball game was played way back in either the late 1700's or early 1800's. But the record has unfortunately been cluttered with games that were never played!

At the Delaware County Fairgrounds in Manchester, Iowa on Sep 25, 1925, or so the story goes as told in the Des Moines Register, the Cascade Reds and Ryan Shamrocks (also referred to in local papers as the Micks and Fighting Irish respectively) town ball teams started a game they never dreamed would last two years! Called on account of darkness after 16 innings with the score knotted at 1, the game continued nine days later on Oct 4 in Ryan, but was again called due to darkness with the score tied 6-6 after another 15 innings, for a total of 31 innings. It then scheduled to be continued at Legion Park in Cascade, but was rained out the next two weekends. Because of cold weather and snow, it was decided to continue the game the next summer. On Jul 1, 1926, after a delay of some nine months, the Reds and Shamrocks got together again to finally settle matters in Cascade.

Incredibly, for the third time, the game was called on account of darkness after another 14 innings, for a total of 45 innings, still tied 8-8. Three months later, on Sep 26, this time back in Ryan, Cascade finally emerged victorious by a score of 9-8 after another 9 innings, for a total of 54 innings. Both pitchers, Heinie Featherstone for Cascade and J.B. "Highball" McAreavey for Ryan, were spitballers. The final totals of 367 days over two years and 54 innings were thought to be incredible all-time baseball records which would never be broken. This great 54-inning Iowa game served as inspiration for the 2,614-inning game in W.P. Kinsella's novel, the Iowa Baseball Conspiracy, probably the greatest baseball novel ever written.

On May 8-9, 1984, the Chicago White Sox hosted the Milwaukee Brewers and set the current AL record of 25 innings. Shortly thereafter, on May 21, sports columnist Maury White recalled the 54-inning game in the Des Moines Register, and wondered what all the fuss was about for a mere 25-inning game in Chicago, when Iowa had hosted a 54-inning game? White partially based his column on Tait Cummins' "Tait's Scrapbook" columns in the Nov 5 and Nov 12, 1970 Cedar Rapids Witness.

As I attempted to track down elusive microfilm records from local papers in Cascade, Dubuque, and Cedar Rapids, I discovered that, alas, as is so often the case, all is not as it seems! Thanks to SABR member R.J. Lesch of Adel, Iowa, the mystery was unraveled when we obtained original newspaper accounts from the Cascade Pioneer, Dubuque Telegraph-Herald, and Cedar Rapids Gazette.

What we discovered was documentary proof that the supposed 54-inning game was actually four separate games. When Cascade scored twice and Ryan scored once in the first inning played on the supposed second day of the game, the game continued, which proves it was a separate second game. Were it the 17th inning of the earlier 1-1 game called after 16 innings, then the game would have been over at that point, with Cascade winning 3-2 in 17 innings.

Newspaper accounts also proved that the supposed fifth day of the game (the third and fourth days were rainouts) was a separate third game and not a continuation of the second game. Cascade scored a run in the first inning and Ryan did not score, but the game continued, which it could not have done were it the continuation of an earlier game. And lastly, the events of the supposed sixth day of the game were a separate fourth game and not a continuation. Cascade scored a run in the sixth and Ryan did not score, but the game continued.

Although the 1970 Cedar Rapids Witness columns by Tait Cummins had the dates correct, the 1984 Des Moines Register column by Maury White had the dates wrong for three of the four games. The first game was Sep 4, 1925, not Sep 25. The second game was Sep 13, 1925, not Oct 4. The third game was Jul 4, 1926, not Jul 1. The Register did get the date of the fourth game correct: Sep 26, 1926.

So here's what really happened. On Sep 4, 1925, Cascade and Ryan played to a 1-1 tie in 16 innings in Manchester. On Sep 13, 1925, they played to a 5-5 tie in 15 innings in Ryan, and were then rained out Sep 27 and Oct 4 in Cascade. On Jul 4, 1926, the two teams played to a 2-2 tie in 14 innings in Cascade. And lastly, on Sep 26, 1926, Cascade defeated Ryan 1-0 in 9 innings at Ryan. If you add it all up, you DO have Cascade scoring 9 and Ryan scoring 8 in a total of 54 innings spread out over 388 days, but it was most definitely four separate games and NOT one 54-inning game.

In 1948, a reunion was held at Cascade's Legion Park for players who had participated in this remarkable series of games, and the oldtimers played a 7-inning game "for old times sake". It was then discovered the first of the four games had actually **NOT** been called on account of darkness. Umpire Fritz McPartland of Cedar Rapids admitted he called the game so he could get back home in time to do his chores!

Cascade is the birthplace of Urban "Red" Faber, who pitched for the White Sox 1914-33. Built in 1921, Legion Park is still used today for baseball by American Legion Post 528 and Cascade High School. In center field stands Iowa's very own "Green Monster", which used to be Cascade's old drive-in movie screen until 1988, when it was placed in center field to help batters see the ball better.

So how did generations of baseball historians get misled? Local newspaper accounts clearly indicated four separate games were played. One misleading headline in the Sep 17, 1925 Cascade Pioneer stated, "No Decision Reached at End of 31 Innings". But the text of the story clearly stated there were separate games.

The columns by Tait Cummins in the Nov 5 and Nov 12, 1970 Cedar Rapids Witness also clearly indicated there were four separate games. But when Maury White's column in the May 21, 1984 Des Moines Register mistakenly referred to the four separate games as a "54-inning game", the seed was planted for the "great myth" of the 54-inning Iowa game.

## **6. LONGEST HIGH SCHOOL MARATHON NEVER PLAYED: 28 INNINGS IN INDIANA**

The longest high school marathon "never played" was a supposed "28-inning 6-day long" contest in Highland, Indiana on May 7, two unknown rainout dates, then May 17, 25, and 26, 1976 between the Highland Trojans and Griffith Panthers. For 28 years, from 1976 through 2004, this game was incorrectly listed by the Indiana High School Athletic Association, Indiana High School Baseball Coaches Association, and National Federation of High School Associations as the longest high school game ever played, but there was never any final score given, and it was always listed simply as "1976", with no month and no date.

For over a decade, I became increasingly concerned that despite visits to both Highland and Griffith, and dozens of letters, phone calls, and e-mails to high school coaches and principals in Highland and Griffith and to sports editors in nearby Gary, Hammond, and Chicago, nobody could tell me either the exact date of the game or the final score.

The only facts discovered during this long decade of unsuccessful research were that neither the Griffith nor Highland high school yearbooks nor school newspapers mentioned the game; the two schools were supposed to play Jun 5, 1976 according to the Hammond Times, but the Jun 6 Gary Post-Tribune stated they played other teams on Jun 5; issues of the Jun 5 Gary Post-Tribune and Jun 6 Hammond Times were missing from all microfilm archives, and on Nov 1, 2003 Highland baseball coach Dan Miller found four former Highland players who played in the game but all they could remember was "the game was real long".

David Zandstra, President of the Highland Historical Society, finally solved the puzzle by finding a scrapbook owned by Bill Helmer, a former Highland

player who played in the game. This scrapbook contains articles from the Lake Suburban Sun Journal and Gary Post-Tribune which explain what really happened. The first three days of the "game" were rainouts. The May 7 game was rained out at Highland's Hilltop Park, along the Little Calumet River. It was rescheduled, but rained out a second and third time on two unknown dates between May 7 and May 17. On May 17, the "fourth day" of the game, the game was called due to darkness after 10 innings with the scored tied 2-2.

In both the May 18 Lake Suburban Sun Journal and May 18 Gary Post-Tribune newspaper articles, authors Rich Lindsey of the Sun Journal and Al Hamnik of the Post-Tribune stated neither the Indiana High School Athletic Association nor Lake Suburban Conference had any rules on whether a 10-inning tie game should be continued with play commencing in the top of the 11th, or an entirely new game should be started. Griffith Athletic Director Jim Bartlett stated, "Nothing like this has ever happened before, so we have nothing to go by."

Between May 18 and May 25, an unknown person decided a new game would be started. However, when on May 25, the "fifth day", the two teams played a second game to a scoreless tie in 11 innings before 225 fans, the "myth" was created that they had played 21 innings and were still tied. The next day, May 26, the "sixth day" of the supposed "28-inning six-day" game, Griffith won the third game 5-2 in 7 innings.

The May 26 box score provides documentary proof that three separate games were played rather than one 28-inning game. Griffith scored twice in the top of the second to take a 2-0 lead. Highland did not score in the bottom of the inning, but the game continued. Had it been the bottom of the 23rd inning rather than the bottom of the 2nd, the game would have been over. The fact the game continued proves there were three games played: a 10-inning 2-2 tie May 17, an 11-inning scoreless tie May 25, and a 7-inning 5-2 Griffith victory May 26.

Here's another example of how some people could not help but think instinctively of the whole 6-day series of events as one long 28- inning marathon. Jack Moorman of Griffith pitched the entire 10-inning 2-2 game May 17, and also the first 10 innings of the 11-inning scoreless tie May 25. Jack told me that in a locker room team meeting after Griffith won the 7-inning May 26 game 5-2, Griffith head coach Dave Price awarded him two official "saves" for his 20 innings of pitching, although his 20 innings were pitched in two games which officially had nothing to do with the May 26 game.

On Aug 7, 2004, I sent these facts to the following people responsible for editing the record books: John Gillis, Assistant Director, National Federation of High School Associations; Lance Patterson, Record Update Coordinator, Indiana High School Baseball Coaches Association; and Bill Jones, Executive Director, Indiana High School Athletic Association. On Nov 15, 2004, Mr. Gillis wrote back to confirm that the error has been corrected in the upcoming 2005 edition of the National High School Sports Record Book.

So how did generations of baseball historians get misled a second time? Many people, remembering earlier newspaper articles, believed the game lasted 10 + 11 + 7 = 28 innings, even though May 27 newspaper accounts of the May 26 game clearly indicated three separate games were played. One such person sent in official notification to those who back then kept records for Indiana high school baseball. Thus began the chain of events which led to Indiana and national high school baseball records being wrong for almost three decades.

## 7. OTHER MARATHONS NEVER PLAYED: KNICKERBOCKERS AND KILLER TOMATOES

On Jul 18, 1951, Harman Nichols wrote a sports column for the Washington Post which discussed a 33-inning game in the Illinois-Indiana-Iowa (3-I) League. The game supposedly took place in 1906 between the Decatur Commodores and Davenport Knickerbockers.

After 17 innings of scoreless ball Jul 28 in Davenport, the game was suspended due to darkness and continued Aug 24 in Decatur with another 16 innings of scoreless ball, resulting in a 33-inning scoreless tie. However, with the help of public library reference librarians in Decatur and Davenport, I discovered that these were two separate games.

So how did generations of baseball historians get misled a third time? Mr. Nichols' article stated, "And you talk about the longest game on record. You think it was the 26 innings Brooklyn and the Boston Braves played a few years back. It wasn't. The Davenport team in 1906 fought tooth and nail with Decatur Jul 28 for 17 innings without a score being made. The game was called when the sun disappeared. On Aug 24, the same two teams picked up where they had left off. Sixteen more innings, and still no score. Again came darkness. One game with 33 innings - and not a run."

Another supposed "28-inning" game which was never actually played occurred in South Dakota Jul 19 and 26, 1948 between Bonesteel and the Platte Killer Tomatoes. Supposedly, the game was suspended in Platte at 2 AM in the early morning hours of Jul 20 with the score 1-1, and concluded in Bonesteel a week later, with Bonesteel winning 4-3. Winning pitcher Spud Grosshuesch supposedly had 62 strikeouts in the game. During my effort to find the box score, I enlisted the help of Ralph Nachtigal, editor of the Platte Enterprise. After digging out the old 1948 newspaper accounts, we discovered the game did not actually last 28 innings.

On Jul 19, 1948, the two teams met in Platte, and the game was called after 15 innings, tied 1-1. When the teams met a week later in nearby Bonesteel on Jul 26, however, they started all over again and played an entirely separate game, which went 13 innings. Bonesteel took an early 3-0 lead. The Killer Tomatoes, back then known as the 5-Milers, scored one in the 8th to cut the lead to 3-1, and two in the 9th to send the game into extra innings. Bonesteel won 4-3 with a run in the bottom of the 13th. Winning pitcher Spud Grosshuesch did pitch all 28 innings for Bonesteel, and he did have had 62 strikeouts, but 34 of them were in the first game, and 28 in the second game.

How did generations of baseball historians again get misled, for a fourth time? Just as in the Indiana case, someone confused the facts, and reported to the South Dakota Amateur Baseball Association that Bonesteel had defeated Platte 4-3 in 28 innings.

The fifth longest game never played was a supposed "22-inning" game Jul 3, 1932 in the Mississippi Valley League. The Keokuk Indians and Burlington Bees "played" to a scoreless tie cited many times in baseball literature on longest games. During my research, I always wondered how this game could be so similar, in so many ways, to another game also played in Burlington, Iowa 17 years earlier in the Central Association Jun 27, 1915. In both games, Keokuk visited Burlington, the game was scoreless, it lasted 22 innings, and the time of game was 3:50. The only difference was the date.

Although I wrote dozens of letters over the last decade to sports editors, journalists, and SABR members in Keokuk, Burlington, and Des Moines, I had no answer to the dilemma until SABR member Tim Rask of Iowa City solved the puzzle by researching the Burlington Hawk-Eye newspaper archives at the Iowa Historical Library in Iowa City.

How did generations of baseball historians once more get misled, for a fifth time? Hawk-Eye sports editor Ed Dent thought it was very interesting that Larry Brown, a player in the 22-inning 1915 Keokuk at Burlington game was umpiring in the Mississippi Valley League in 1932, which included teams from both Keokuk and Burlington. So Dent ran a copy of the Jun 29, 1915 Hawk-Eye article about the Jun 27, 1915 game in his Jul 3, 1932 edition, with an accompanying article about Brown. What is most interesting is that the date ascribed to the phantom game was Jul 3 rather than Jul 2, since the Jul 3 article should reasonably have been expected to concern a game played the previous day on Jul 2.

Another marathon never played was a supposed "20-inning" 2-2 tie in the Cotton States League in Greenville, Mississippi Jul 11, 1904 between the Greenville Cotton Pickers and Vicksburg Hill Billies. Just as in the case of the Keokuk at Burlington game, baseball literature on longest games makes numerous mentions of this game.

Dave Black, a SABR member from Highlands Ranch, Colorado, discovered an article in the Jul 12, 1904 Chicago Daily Tribune which proves this game was called due to darkness after only 19 innings.

How did generations of baseball historians get misled for a sixth time? The mistaken belief the game lasted 20 innings derived from the Daily Tribune's headline writer. Knowing the game had been called in the top of the 20th, he wrote the following headline, "Play Twenty Innings To A Tie". Reflective of sports writing in the early 20th Century era, the article concluded, "The game abounded in brilliant ball playing."

## **8. LONGEST MASSACHUSETTS RULES MARATHON: 211 INNINGS IN ASHLAND**

During the Nineteenth Century, many teams played under Massachusetts Rules requiring the winning team to score a minimum number of runs or "tallies", sometimes 25, sometimes 50, sometimes 65, sometimes 100. The Massachusetts Rules were established at Dedham, Massachusetts, and the first game played using these rules was May 31, 1858 on the Boston Common as the Holliston Winthrop's defeated the Boston Olympics 100-27.

Games played under Massachusetts Rules established records for numbers of innings which have never been equaled. However, these records must be considered differently than other records, since one inning was defined not by three outs, but rather by one out.

One could argue a Massachusetts Rules game of 27 innings was actually a game of only 9 innings, because it only had 27 outs per team. But a baseball historian can't choose arbitrarily to rewrite history based on data from subsequent times. When a game was played under Massachusetts Rules, and it took 27 innings, it was definitely **NOT** a 9-inning game.

On Jul 28, 1859, the longest game by innings was played in Ashland, Massachusetts. The Medway Unions defeated the Upton Excelsiors 100-78 in 211 innings.

The next year, at the same location, the same two teams played the longest game ever played in the history of baseball, and one of the greatest games of all-time: 172 innings over seven days! The game was scheduled to begin Sep 25, 1860. Play continued through Sep 26, 27, 28; Oct 1, 4, and 5 until finally it was called a complete game with the score Upton 50 Medway 29. The game took a record 21 hours 50 minutes of actual game time. On its first, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh days, we do not know the attendance, but we know 4000 fans attended on its second day, Sep 26.

Total elapsed time also set an all-time record of something in excess of 25 hours 0 minutes, with a dinner and rain delay of 20 minutes in the bottom of the 13th Sep 25, a second rain delay of 2 hours 30 minutes in the bottom of the 13th Sep 26, a lunch delay of 20 minutes Sep 27, a third rain delay of unspecified duration in the top of the 173 rd Oct 4, and a fourth and final rain delay, again of unspecified duration, and again in the top of the 173 rd on Oct 5.

The game was suspended for the first time Sep 25 after 12 ½ innings with game time at 2:40 and Upton ahead 5-4, suspended for the second time Sep 26 after 34 ½ innings with game time at 5:40 and Upton ahead 8-7, suspended for the third time Sep 27 after 83 ½ innings with game time at 12:50 and Upton ahead 23-15, suspended for the fourth time Sep 28 after 136 ½ innings and game time at 17:20 with Upton ahead 38-25, and then scheduled to resume Oct 1 in Springfield. However, it was decided to resume the game instead Oct 4 back in Worcester. It was suspended for the fifth time Oct 4 after 172 innings with game time at 21:50 and Upton ahead 50-29. Rain on Oct 5 prevented the game from ever resuming, and the umpire and both teams finally agreed to call it a complete game, despite the fact the rules required a team to score 100 runs to win and Upton had scored only 50.

Another game played under Massachusetts Rules was a 30-inning contest played at Janesville, Wisconsin Aug 10, 1860. Croft's Team defeated Hogan's Team 50-34. Under the 50-Tally Rule, the winner was required to score 50 runs.

#### **9. LONGEST FICTIONAL MARATHON: 2,614 INNINGS IN IOWA**

The Iowa Baseball Confederacy by W.P. Kinsella is the greatest baseball novel ever written. In the novel, the Chicago Cubs came to Drifting Away's Ball Diamond in Big Inning, Iowa Jul 4, 1908 to play a doubleheader against an all-star team of players from the minor league Iowa Baseball Confederacy. As the first game went on, and on, and on, and extended into the 16th inning, the second game was cancelled.

After the game was adjourned for the evening, still tied, 5000 fans packed the park the next day, having no idea the game would eventually continue through driving rainstorms for 40 days. Ten thousand fans turned out Jul 24 for the 21st day of the game. At dawn on Aug 12, the fortieth day, a Confederacy pinch hitter hit an awesome homer in the bottom of the 2614 th to end the game "that would never end". Final score: Iowa Baseball Confederacy 12 Chicago Cubs 11 in 2,614 innings.

#### **10. LONGEST SPOOF MARATHONS: 39 INNINGS AND MOONLIGHT; 57 INNINGS AND THE BULL, THE BRUISER, AND AN INNOCENT FIREFLY**

In 1884, the Denver Opinion printed a story purporting to be a summary of an 11-year old newspaper article in the Portland Oregonian about the 39-inning "Moonlight Game" played in 1873 between printers union teams of two Portland newspapers, the Oregonian and its bitter rival, the Bulletin. The game began at 12:30 PM. After 22 innings, the teams were still locked in a scoreless tie, when the umpire called the game due to darkness. However, vigorous disagreement from fans and players caused the umpire to reconsider. Lanterns and locomotive headlights were found to light the field. A dinner delay was taken from 7:00 PM to 7:30 PM.

At 1 AM, in the bottom of the 39th, the Bulletin's George Good lofted a long fly to right, which was dropped and booted by the Oregonian's right fielder Estabrook for a 4-base error. Final score: Bulletin 1 Oregonian 0. Asked about his error by reporters after the game, Estabrook stated the moon had been shining in his face and he couldn't see the ball.

Thirty-four years later, on Jul 7, 1907, the spoof innings record was raised from 39 to 50 in Munchausen, Pennsylvania, as the Lyerhelms and Fakenhursts played a 50-inning scoreless tie. The teams were named after their respective pitchers. Lyerhelm had a no-hitter, struck out 93, and gave up only one walk. Fakenhurst had a perfect game and struck out 89. The "Liars" and "Fakers" played in a town named after the Baron von Munchausen (1720-97), the famous German storyteller whose tall tales were so outrageous and ridiculous that the medical condition for compulsive lying, Munchausen's Syndrome, is named after him.

The next year, the spoof innings record was raised from 50 to 57 when the May 17, 1908 Washington Post recounted the "Firefly Game" of 1907 at Jones County Eye, Ear, and Tongue Infirmary. Although the state is not mentioned, it can be presumed to be New York, since Schenectady is prominently mentioned. The Lightfoot Lilies downed the Ringtail Roarers in 57 innings. The game was called a tie at dusk after 17 innings, but just as in the Portland "Moonlight Game" of 1873, vigorous disagreement from fans and players caused the umpire to reconsider. A farmer drove his horse-drawn wagon to a nearby university's chemistry lab to obtain phosphorus, which was smeared on the baseball, enabling the game to be continued after only a 23-minute delay.

As dawn approached, the Lilies took a 1-0 lead in the top of the 57th on a mammoth home run by Bull Thompson. In the bottom of the 57th, Bruiser Brown was at bat with a full count, runners on 2nd and 3rd, and only one out. The Lilies pitcher picked the Roarers runner off 2nd: "Like a flash, he shot the ball over to second, catching the runner off base by a good three yards. At almost the same instant, an innocent firefly started up out of the grass and flitted across the plate. 'Swish'. Nervous and overstrung, Bruiser Brown had struck viciously at the firefly. Three strikes and out. Double play. Side out. Just then, clear and triumphant, through the clear night air sounded the crowing of a cock in some distant barnyard. Dawn was breaking." Final score: Lilies 1 Roarers 0.

After another two decades, another spoof came along, this time a 33-inning game in the Aug 1, 1926 Washington Post: "St. Louis Insects defeated the Georgetown nine, 5-4, in a 33-inning ball game, according to a report made by Manager Tastle of the winners, who stated pitcher Tastle went the full route. Slornoi of the losing team pitched only 20 innings before being relieved." A detailed search has revealed no evidence a team named the St. Louis Insects ever existed.

The last major spoof occurred in Oct 2003, authored by ESPN.com. The Cubs, hoping to finally win a World Series after waiting patiently since 1908, and the Red Sox, then waiting since 1918, met in the 2003 World Series to determine the answer, once and for all, to the question, "Whose curse is worse?". The Red Sox led 1-0 as the Cubs came to bat in the top of the ninth of Game 7 at Fenway.

With Fate desperately looking for a way to allow neither team to win, Sammy Sosa came to the plate with two outs, two strikes, nobody on, and the Cubs down to their last strike. He promptly hit the first home run to ever bounce off the distant CITGO sign in left center, sending the game into extra innings. As the game entered the 13th, fire and brimstone rained down from the sky, but Red Sox manager Grady Little stayed with Pedro Martinez and Cubs manager Dusty Baker stayed with Kerry Wood. After each inning thereafter, Little stayed with Pedro and Baker stayed with Wood.

Finally, as dawn approached in the 28th, with the score 34-34, a meteorite struck the home of soon-to-be Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in Sacramento, floods covered the globe, a dust cloud encircled the planet, and temperatures dropped precipitously by 30 degrees worldwide, killing most crops. The result of all this chaos was mass starvation, near-extinction of the human race, and suspension of Game 7 of the World Series with the score still tied in the 28th. Final score: Cubs 34 Red Sox 34, with both teams still waiting to win the Series. Little then did the Red Sox know that they would wait only one more year!

#### **11. YEAR OF THE MARATHON: 1907**

The spoofs of Munchausen and Jones County were spawned by the unique "Year of the Marathon" in 1907, a season which saw three record-breaking marathons come along in rapid succession within only 27 days. The W.P. Kinsella novel, Iowa Baseball Confederacy, also took place in the same general time period, the next year in 1908. The total of 11 marathons in the year 1907 is still today more than in any other year. Since 1859, when the first marathon took place, the only years when no marathon has occurred are 1861-76, 1878-90, 1893-97, 1899-1901, 1904, 1925, 1934, 1937, 1961, and 1992.

On Jun 8, 1907, the all-time, amateur, and grammar school records were broken with a 28-inning game at Dorchester Franklin Field Diamond #5 in Boston. Henry L. Pierce Grammar School of Dorchester defeated Bennet Grammar School of Brighton 4-3 in 5 hours 50 minutes. Less than a month later, Jul 4 at Brookside Park in Cleveland, the all-time and amateur records were both broken again in a 30-inning game. The Brooklyn Athletic Club defeated Cleveland's East End All Stars 4-1, again in 5 hours 50 minutes.

And then the very next day, Jul 5, again in Ohio at Recreation Park in Columbus, the records were broken once more in a 36-inning game. The Heintz Victors and Columbus Selects played to a 2-2 tie in 3 hours 50 minutes. Heintz was also referred to in Columbus papers as Heints, with an "s" instead of a "z". Unfortunately, although a century later this 36-inning game is still the longest game by innings ever played in the U.S., we know almost nothing about it. The only article on the game is in the Jul 6 Columbus Citizen on page 5. The headline states, "Here's a World's Record". But then the article takes up only five sentences, telling us only that it was a morning game called due to players' exhaustion rather than darkness, Victors pitcher Decker struck out 20 while Selects pitcher Robins struck out only 19,

each team got 8 hits, the Victors scored in the 5th and 31st while the Selects scored in the 6th and 31st, and the Victors made 5 errors while the Selects made 7.

## **12. LONGEST CZECH GAME AND THE BEATLES: STRAWBERRY FIELDS FOREVER**

On May 10, 2003, the longest Czech extra inning game ever played was decided in Blansko. Arrows Ostrava defeated Olympia Blansko 5-4 in 15 innings at the best-named ballpark in the world, Strawberry Fields Forever, named in honor of John Lennon and the Beatles. The second- best-named ballpark, the Big Egg domed stadium in Tokyo, has thus far not distinguished itself in any way with marathons. But the third-best-named ballpark has. The Eagle's Nest, home of the Mexicali Eagles of the Mexican Pacific League, hosted a 20-inning marathon Jan 2, 1979.

## **13. OTHER LONGEST EVENTS: MUD FINDS THE NET**

The longest pro football game was seven periods, including three overtimes. On Jun 30, 1984 in the LA Coliseum, the USFL Los Angeles Express defeated the Michigan Panthers 27-21 in 93 minutes 33 seconds of playing time. Elapsed time was four hours 4 minutes, from 12:41 PM to 4:45 PM. The winning touchdown was scored near where home plate was when the Dodgers played in the Coliseum 1958-61.

The longest pro basketball game was 10 periods, including six overtimes, on Jan 6, 1951 at the War Memorial in Rochester. The NBA Indianapolis Olympians downed the Rochester Royals 75-73 in 78 minutes of playing time.

The longest pro ice hockey game was nine periods, including six overtimes. On Mar 24, 1936 in the Montreal Forum, the NHL Detroit Red Wings defeated the Montreal Maroons 1-0 when Mud Bruneteau found the net at 2:25 AM. The game took 176 minutes 30 seconds of playing time. Elapsed time was five hours 44 minutes, from 8:41 PM to 2:25 PM.

The longest concert was by the Grand Boys at Smith's Restaurant in Stirling, Scotland Feb 20-22, 2004. Elapsed time: 42 hours 38 minutes.

## **14. FAMOUS PLAYERS IN MARATHONS: IRON MAN, CY, THE SAY HEY KID, & YAZ**

Hall of Famer Joe "Iron Man" McGinnity owed his major league career to a marathon in the Western Association. Iron Man went the distance for the Peoria Blackbirds as they defeated the visiting St. Joseph Saints 8-4 in 21 innings Jun 27, 1898. His pitching was so impressive that day that the Orioles signed him for the 1899 NL season.

Hall of Famers Cy Young of the Red Sox and Rube Waddell of the A's faced off in a 20-inning marathon in the PM game of a morning/afternoon doubleheader Jul 4, 1905 at Huntington Grounds in Boston. Both teams scored two in the 9th. Then in the 20th, with two on, Young broke A's batter Jack Knight's arm with a brushback pitch on the inside corner. With the bases now full, Young induced the next batter to hit a double play grounder, but his infielder made an error, allowing the A's to win 4-2. These two greats faced each other previously May 5, 1904. Young pitched a perfect game that day, with the Red Sox winning 3-0.

Another pitcher named Jacob Jung, was nicknamed "Cy Young VII". A graduate of the University of Wisconsin, he pitched 17 innings of no-hit ball but then

gave up 7 hits over the last four innings while going the whole way in a losing cause for the Milwaukee White Sox Jul 19, 1908. The visiting Sox lost the 21-inning Lakeshore League game to the hometown Sheboygan Chairmakers 1-0. This "Cy" was signed soon thereafter by the Cubs on Aug 10, 1908, but he never pitched for them. A third fellow nicknamed "Cy" Young had a 2-3 record for the Federal League Balt-Feds in 1915. In deference to the Hall of Famer, almost every pitcher named Young was nicknamed "Cy" in the early 1900's. There was a Cy the Second, Irv Young, and a Cy the Third, Harley Young, who were traded for each other by the Braves and Pirates Jun 18, 1908. Irv pitched 172 innings in the majors in 1908, while Harley pitched 75.

Hall of Famer Willie Mays, the "Say Hey Kid", played center field AND shortstop May 31, 1964 for the Giants as they defeated the Mets 8-6 in 23 innings in the second game of a doubleheader at Shea. In the bottom of the seventh, with two on and the Mets trailing 6-3, Joe Christopher hit a long fly to right center. Mays raced back, leaped high above the 8-foot high fence, and caught the ball, but as he collided with the fence, the ball dropped out of his glove and over the fence for a 3-run homer. This ended the scoring until Del Crandall hit the game-winning RBI in the 23rd.

Hall of Famer Carl Yastrzemski played in the memorable 20-inning Red Sox-Yankee marathon at Yankee Stadium Aug 29, 1967. In the second game of a twi-nighter, Yaz had six putouts in left, and went 0 for 6 with 3 walks. Both teams scored in the 11<sup>th</sup>. The Yanks won 4-3 after the Sox loaded the bases but failed to score in the 20th.

## **15. FIRST-EVER GAMES OF X INNINGS**

Baseball was played as early as 1791 in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. The next mention of a baseball game is Apr 26, 1823 at Mr. Jones's Retreat in Broadway in New York City. This was a pick-up game, meaning there were no organized teams. Rules called for a team scoring 21 runs first to be declared the winner. It would not be until May 1857 the winner would be the team with the most runs after nine innings, and then only if the teams were not playing by Massachusetts Rules.

A game played nine years later in 1832, again in New York City at Madison Square, may have been the first game ever between two relatively organized teams. A team representing 1st Ward of Lower Manhattan played a team representing the 9th and 15th Wards of Upper Manhattan. Just four years later, in 1836, at the Baseball Grounds in Canton, China, the Boston Union Club played the English Club. In all three of these groundbreaking games, we have neither a record of the number of innings nor a final score.

The first-ever 3-inning game may have been at Elysian Fields in Hoboken, New Jersey Oct 6, 1845 as the New York Knickerbockers played an intrasquad game. The final score was 11-8, with seven players on each side. The first-ever 4-inning game may have been at Elysian Fields later that month, on Oct 21. The New York Base Ball Club beat the Brooklyn Base Ball Club 24-4, with eight players on each side. The first-ever 5-inning game may have been another Knickerbocker intrasquad game at Elysian Fields in Oct 1845, with the final score 33-26.

The first-ever game to last more than 9 innings may have been the 10-inning game Nov 18, 1845 at Elysian Fields. William R. Wheaton's Team beat William H. Tucker's Team 51-42. The 21-Rule called for a team scoring 21 runs first to be declared the winner, so these two teams must have either had several

ties at the end of innings, or they must have both exploded offensively in the tenth inning.

The record for longest game stood at 10 innings for seven years, until Jun 24 or 27, 1852 when the Gothams took 16 innings to beat the Knickerbockers 21-16 at Red House Grounds in New York City. The first-ever 6-inning game may have occurred the next year, Jul 16, 1853, at Red House Grounds, as the Knickerbockers beat the Gothams 21-12 in the first-ever game with a box score.

The first-ever 9-inning game under the new rules establishing 9 innings as the normal length of the game unless tied, was at Madison Square in May 1857 in a Knickerbocker intrasquad game. The first-ever extra inning game under new 9-inning rules may have been in Brooklyn Jun 6, 1865. The Gothams scored in the 9th to tie Enterprise at 17. In the 13th, Enterprise scored one, but Gothams then scored two to win, 19-18.

The first-ever games taking 1-45 innings, and the last-ever games taking 20-45 innings are given in Appendix 3. The list includes neither marathons played under Massachusetts Rules nor planned marathons to raise money for charity.

#### **16. MOST IMPORTANT FIRST-EVER GAME OF X INNINGS: SILK'S ROBBERY**

The first-ever game of x innings with the most impact on a pennant race was the first-ever 17-inning game in the major leagues Sep 30, 1907 during the "Year of the Marathon". Fans jammed every seat, aisle, and girder, and then spilled over into the outfield behind ropes at Columbia Park in Philadelphia to see the first-place Tigers and second-place Athletics play a crucial doubleheader to decide the AL pennant. The A's grabbed an early 7-1 lead, but Hall of Fame reliever Rube Waddell could not hold the lead. Another Hall of Famer, Ty Cobb, climaxed the Tigers comeback with a two-run homer in the top of the 9th, tying the game at 8. Detroit scored one in the 11th, only to have the A's tie it back up once again at 9.

In the 14th, the A's should have won the game, but were robbed. As Harry Davis' long fly ball to center sailed over the rope into the fans for what should have been a ground-rule double, Tiger center fielder Sam Crawford claimed a policeman sitting by the ropes had interfered with him. Home plate ump Silk O'Loughlin ruled there was no interference, but after the Tigers argued, he changed his ruling and sent Davis back to first. Danny Murphy promptly hit a single that would have scored Davis. Davis did not score, and darkness halted the contest after the 17th.

The nightcap was postponed and never played. The Tigers went on to sweep a four-game series against the Senators in Washington, and won the pennant by a game and a half. Had no interference been called on the policeman, and had Philadelphia won the second game which was never played, the A's would have won the pennant instead of the Tigers.

This game was unusual in another way. It was the long-awaited first-ever 17-inning game in major league history. By this time, in 1907, the first-ever 24-inning major league game had been held a year ago in 1906, the first-ever 20-inning major league game had been held 15 years ago in 1892, the first-ever 18-inning major league game had been held 25 years ago in 1882, and the first-ever 16-inning major league game had been held 31 years ago in 1876. This indicates to me that it is very possible that a 17-inning game may have

already occurred before 1907, but thorough efforts to find one have thus far failed.

#### **17. LONGEST PLANNED MARATHONS: 65 INNINGS IN TUCSON**

Some games have been planned as marathons, usually as a fundraiser for a charitable cause. The Women's Marathon 24 Hours for Africa lasted 65 innings Oct 18-19, 2003 at Tucson Electric Park in Arizona, and raised \$60,000 to assist AIDS victims in Africa. The African Gray Birds defeated the Red-Eyed Nites 127-110. Seventy-two players from Japan, Australia, and 18 U.S. states participated, ranging in age from 13 to 80. Official time of game was 24 hours 12 minutes. There were 100 fans at the start at eight minutes after Noon, 50 fans at 6 PM, 25 fans at Midnight, 0 fans the next morning at 6 AM, and 12 loyal fans still there when the game ended at 12:20 PM.

Five other planned baseball marathons are known to have taken place. The first involved Springbrook High School in Silver Spring, Maryland for 100 innings. The second occurred at Fort Sheridan, Illinois, with two high schools playing 100 innings to raise funds for a trip to Australia. The third and fourth were fundraisers for the Friends University baseball team in Wichita, Kansas which took 79 and 100 innings respectively. The fifth was sponsored by Curt Schilling and the Boston Men's Adult Baseball League (MABL), and lasted 101 innings and 30 hours 45 minutes.

#### **18. LONGEST MILITARY MARATHON: 21 INNINGS IN GUAM**

The longest game ever played by an Air Force team may be the 20-inning game at South Bend, Indiana Jul 14, 1945. The Notre Dame Fighting Irish downed Stout Army Air Field 1-0. The longest games ever played by a Navy team may be the 21-inning game played in either 1944 or 1945 in Guam between the Seebees and Rinkeydinks, and a 21-inning game played in the California National Baseball Congress (NBC) tournament in 1953 between the San Diego Naval Air Station (NAS) and Fort Ord. And the longest game ever played in the Army may be an all-night game played Oct 20, 2003 in occupied Iraq by teams from the 101st Airborne Division at Delta Company Desperados Field, a makeshift ballpark in the desert near Tell 'Afar. The teams were managed by Captains Hunter Marshall and Adam Kumann.

#### **19. LONGEST WOMEN'S MARATHONS: 22 INNINGS IN RACINE AND MUSKEGON**

On Jul 31, 1947, at Horlick Field in Racine, Wisconsin, the South Bend Blue Sox defeated the Racine Belles 4-3 in 22 innings. This women's record was tied two years later at Marsh Field in Muskegon, Michigan as the Muskegon Lassies downed the Rockford Peaches 1-0. The All-American Girls' Professional Baseball League was organized during World War II, and continued with teams from the midwestern part of the country from 1943 through 1954. The league was the subject of the movie "A League of Their Own" starring Geena Davis, Madonna, and Tom Hanks.

#### **20. LONGEST HIGH SCHOOL MARATHON: 25 INNINGS IN OSAKA**

When the supposed "28-inning" 1976 game in Indiana was proven in 2004 to have actually been three separate games, the record for longest high school game reverted to two 25-inning games in Japan. Chukyo-shogyo defeated Akashi-chugaku 1-0 Aug 19, 1933, and Takamatsu-shogyo beat Tokushima-shogyo 2-0 Apr 28, 1958.

The record for longest U. S. high school game is shared by two 24-inning games. At Flamingo Park in Miami Beach, Florida Apr 23, 1970, the Miami High School Stingarees downed the Hialeah High School Thoroughbreds 1-0. And in Norridge, Illinois May 18 and 25, 2004, the Evergreen Park High School Mustangs defeated the Ridgewood High School Rebels 1-0 in a game suspended after 12 innings.

## **21. BALLPARKS & CITIES IN MARATHONS: THE BEE HIVE**

The ballpark which hosted the most marathons is Braves Field in Boston, now known as Boston University's Nickerson Field. This is appropriate, since Braves Field hosted the longest major league game ever played, 26 innings. Braves Field has seen five marathons, two held between Apr 17, 1936 and Apr 23, 1941, when the Braves were officially named the Bees and the ballpark was known as the Bee Hive.

Old Comiskey Park hosted four marathons, including an American Giants game in the Negro American League and three White Sox games in the AL, one of which was the longest AL game ever played, 25 innings. Wrigley Field has hosted three. Other current major league parks which have hosted marathons include R.F.K. and Shea with two apiece, and Yankee Stadium, Fenway Park, Angels Stadium, Humphrey Metrodome, McAfee Coliseum, and Pro Player Stadium with one apiece. The other 21 have never hosted a marathon.

All ballparks hosting two or more marathons, and all cities hosting five or more marathons are listed in Appendix 4. Special consideration is given to Burlington, by allowing Burlington, Iowa with three, Burlington, Vermont and Burlington, North Carolina with one apiece, to combine their totals.

## **22. LONGEST MAJOR LEAGUE MARATHON: 26 INNINGS AT BRAVES FIELD**

At old Comiskey Park on May 8-9, 1984, the White Sox downed the Brewers 7-6 in 25 innings and 8 hours 6 minutes, the major league record for game time. Suspended after 17 innings at 1:05 AM by the AL curfew, the game was won the next evening in the 25th by Harold Baines' homer which just barely cleared the bullpen fence in center. The White Sox scored two in the 9th, and three in the 21st to keep the game tied, and would have won in the 23rd except that Dave Stegman was ruled out for coach's interference when third base coach Jim Leyland helped him to his feet after Stegman tripped rounding third.

This game is rich in "might-have-been's". Had it been an NL game with no curfew, it would have ended at 3:42 AM. Had it been played between 1910-48 or 1976-80 when old Comiskey had no inner fence in center, Baines' drive would have been caught and the two teams might have broken the major league record of 26 innings. Best of all, had the game been the nightcap of the foggy Sep 24, 1971 Astros at Padres twi-night doubleheader which began at 12:01 AM, it would have finished at 8:07 AM, and the last few innings could have been covered live by Bryant Gumbel and Jane Pauley on the "Today Show".

On Sep 11, 1974, Ken Reitz's two-run homer for the Cards with two outs in the 9th tied up the Mets 3-3 at Shea. The pitchers then took total control for 15 innings. Only a hardy thousand of the original crowd of 13,460 remained to see Bake McBride score all the way from first in the 25th when Mets pitcher Hank Webb's pickoff throw to first was wild, and the relay to the plate from the outfield was dropped by catcher Ron Hodges to give the Cards a 4-3 win.

As home plate umpire Ed Sudol ruled the sliding McBride safe at the plate, he couldn't help but remember he had also been behind the plate during two other Mets marathon losses: 23 innings to the Giants in 1964, and 24 innings to the Astros in 1968. At the end, after 7 hours 4 minutes of baseball, the huge right field scoreboard clock read 3:13 AM. Amazingly, the first base umpire had called a balk on the wild pickoff throw. Under a rule recently changed, which had balk calls superceding advances on wild pickoff throws, McBride would have been required to return to second base. He might never have scored, and the game might never have ended.

When nine innings was established as the first major league record for longest game is a matter of dispute. On Apr 22, 1871, the Washington Olympics and Washington Nationals, both fledgling members of the new National Association, met at Olympics Grounds for the first-ever major league game. The Olympics prevailed 36-12 in nine innings, thus setting the first major league record for longest game by innings. However, the Nationals subsequently were dropped from the league because they failed to pay their \$10 league dues, and their five official games were dropped from league standings in Jul 1871.

The honor of "first major league game", and with it the honor of establishing the first major league record for longest game by innings, thus went "after-the-fact" to the Fort Wayne Kekiongas and Forest City's of Cleveland, who met twelve days later on May 4, 1871 at the Grand Duchess in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The Kekiongas won 2-0, before 200 fans. Although this is considered the first major league game ever played, if one believes history cannot and should not be altered "after-the-fact", then it is really the second major league game.

There is absolutely no dispute whatsoever as to the longest major league game ever played. On May 1, 1920, the Boston Braves hosted the Brooklyn Robins at Braves Field. The game took 26 innings and lasted 3 hours 50 minutes, but ended as a 1-1 tie when called at 6:50 PM on account of darkness by Umpire Barry McCormick. Two thousand fans saw starting pitchers Joe Oeschger of the Braves and Leon Cadore of the Robins go the whole way. This feat could never happen now, with all the emphasis on specialized relief pitchers, but starting pitchers commonly pitched entire marathons in the early part of the Twentieth Century.

At the end of the game, Robins shortstop Ivy Olson implored McCormick to allow the game to continue for one more inning so he could tell his grandkids he played three games in one afternoon. McCormick's reply was, "Not without a miner's lamp!", perhaps based on those spoofs a decade earlier which would have us believe a 39-inning game in Portland, Oregon was made possible by lanterns and locomotive headlights, and a 57-inning game in Jones County, New York was made possible by rubbing phosphorus on the baseball.

The Robins' next two games were in Philadelphia against the Phils and then back in Brooklyn vs. the Braves. They took 13 and 19 innings respectively to lose both. So in just three games, they played 58 innings, losing two and tying one, a three-game record for futility which will probably never be equaled.

You would think the Braves and Robins must hold the record for combined innings for two separate games when the first game was tied and had to be replayed in its entirety. By adding the nine innings played later that year to finally have the Braves win once and for all what began May 1, to the 26 innings played May 1, you have 35 innings. But you would be wrong! The A's

and Tigers hold that record: 40 innings. On Jul 21, 1945, they played a 1-1 tie in 24 innings at Shibe Park. When they met two months later to finally come to a decision, the A's took 16 innings to win.

There were two 20-inning marathons in the Negro Leagues (1920-61). Both were played in Chicago and involved the hometown American Giants. The first came in a Negro National League (1920-31, 1933-48) game at Schorling's Park Aug 16, 1922, as the American Giants defeated the Atlantic City Bacharach Giants 1-0. The second came in a Negro American League (1937-61) game at Comiskey Park (I) May 12, 1946, as the American Giants tied the Indianapolis Clowns 3-3. In front of a crowd of 10,000, pitchers Gentry Jessup of the American Giants and Peanut Davis of the Clowns both went the distance. The Clowns were leading in the bottom of the 9th when McCurrine tripled to score Young, and send the game into extra frames.

Nine major leagues have never been involved in a marathon: National Association (1871-75), Union Association (1884), American Association (1892-91), Players League (1890), Federal League (1914-15), Eastern Colored League (1923-28), American Negro League (1929), Negro East-West League (1932), and Negro Southern League (1932). The longest major league extra inning games by league are listed in Appendix 5, and a listing of marathons by league is in Appendix 6.

### **23. MOST INTERESTING DISCOVERY: MONTANA REPORTS THE NEWS FROM WISCONSIN**

The research process involved in discovering marathon games has taken me to the Hall of Fame Libraries in Cooperstown, New York and at the Big Egg in Tokyo, Japan, and just about everywhere in between, including hundreds of ballparks, SABR meetings, and libraries.

But the most unusual discovery was the Jun 15, 1939 21-inning 5 hours 15 minutes marathon in Clintonville, Wisconsin which finished at 1:45 AM. The Clintonville Four-Wheel-Drive (FWD) Truckers defeated Two Rivers Polar Bears 1-0. This game was discovered in a small article found in the Jun 29, 1939 Daily Independent of Helena, Montana, adjoining a story on the Kansas City Monarchs barnstorming visit to Helena. According to the article, Mr. H.E. Danner of Helena reported the game from two weeks prior because his home town was originally Clintonville.

### **24. MOST INTERESTING EVENTS DURING MY RESEARCH: THE CROIX IN THE CAVE**

I have been very fortunate to experience many fantastic and fun times while conducting research on baseball marathons at every major league park, roughly half the existing minor league fields, and many overseas diamonds in Latin America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australia.

I especially treasure my "Croix de Candlestick". This is the most innovative baseball marketing device ever devised by the mind of man. Trapped in a frigidly cold ballpark nicknamed the "Cave of the Winds", with shivering fans huddled under blankets amidst swirling foggy mists and blustery arctic winds, manager Dusty Baker brilliantly convinced Giants players their ballpark gave them a unique advantage over visiting teams, and Giants management awarded the "Croix de Candlestick" pin to all fans still shivering in the ballpark at the conclusion of any night extra inning contest at the 'Stick.

Other great moments during my research included watching the Yakult Swallows play through a monsoon in beautiful ancient Meiji Jingu Stadium in Tokyo,

without the slightest thought of a rain delay; freeing a beautiful yellow moth which got stuck in my scorebook down the third base line in Erie, Pennsylvania at a Sailors game; taking the subway to Yankee Stadium after hearing on the radio at Midnight that a rain-delayed game was only in the fifth, and getting my picture taken with the scoreboard clock by a visiting group from Raynelle, West Virginia as the game concluded at 1:23 AM; seeing the great foul line porches at the Duck Pond, home of the Madison Mallards in Wisconsin; roaming around Fenway Park in the snow in the dead of winter; finding autographed baseballs in the bullpen at Dodger Stadium, also in the middle of winter; getting lost in 12-foot high bushes where Shibe Park used to be, before a church was later built on the site; being imprisoned during a family vacation in an empty Candlestick Park as a teenager after I easily climbed over two fences to get into the outfield but discovered barbed wire preventing me from climbing back over the same two fences to get out again; and having the good fortune to be present when the St. Paul Saints, trailing with two outs in the bottom of the ninth, and down to their last out, scored SEVEN consecutive runs, climaxed by a walk-off grand slam, to win the Northern League championship over the Schaumburg Flyers Sep 19, 2004, the only season-ending walk-off grand slam ever hit in the history of baseball.

#### **25. LONGEST COLLEGE MARATHON: 32 INNINGS IN BRADENTON**

College baseball is due for a "breakout" marathon game. The record for 4-year colleges is shared by two relatively short 22-inning games, both won by the visiting team. The Colorado Buffaloes downed the Nebraska Cornhuskers 2-1 Apr 26, 1974; and the Baylor Bears beat the Houston Cougars 8-2 Feb 21, 1999. Given the large number of 4-year college games, we should be expecting a much longer marathon some day soon.

A 4-year college team did play a longer marathon 127 years ago, but it was against a minor league team rather than against another college. At Holmes Field in Cambridge, Massachusetts on May 11, 1877, the visiting minor league Manchester Pros of the International Association and the Harvard College Crimson played a 24-inning scoreless tie.

The record for a college game was set by two junior college teams Apr 4, 1987 at Robert C. Wynn Field in Bradenton, Florida. The Hillsborough Hawks defeated the Manatee Lancers 6-4 in seven and a half hours. The original crowd of 200 had dwindled to just 45 loyal fans when the end came at 9:30 PM.

#### **26. LONGEST MINOR LEAGUE MARATHON: 33 INNINGS IN PAWTUCKET**

On May 16, 1891, at 11th Street Grounds in Tacoma, the home town Tacoma Daisies downed the Seattle Blues 6-5 in 22 innings. According to the Tacoma newspaper, the 900 fans could be heard all the way to Seattle during the game. Just two months later, on Jul 18, 1891, the Grand Forks Forkers and Fargo Graingrowers took the train to Devil's Lake, North Dakota for a 4 PM Red River League game at the North Dakota State Militia Training Grounds. After 25 scoreless innings, the umpire called the game at 8:10 PM to allow both teams to catch the last train of the night to Grand Forks.

On Jun 14, 1966, at Al Lang Field in St. Petersburg, Florida, the Miami Marlins eked out a 4-3 win over the host St. Pete Cards, managed by future Reds and Tigers manager Sparky Anderson. A 2:00 AM announcement by umpires and managers stating the game would not continue past the 30th inning was greeted with jeers and cries of "More! More!" from the 150 night owls

remaining from the original crowd of 750. The 29-inning record would stand for 15 years until broken in Rhode Island.

At 4:07 AM on Easter morning, Apr 19, 1981, just 51 minutes before sunrise, seventeen freezing and very fortunate souls huddled in the 28 degree pre-dawn chill of Pawtucket, Rhode Island's McCoy Stadium, having just watched their beloved Paw Sox fail to break a 2-2 tie with the Rochester Red Wings in the bottom of the 32nd. When the umpires suspended the game, these brave 17 fans could look back on 8 hours 7 minutes of baseball, preceded by a half-hour power failure delay.

The game resumed two months later on Jun 23, and the mercury had risen to 80 degrees. McCoy was packed to capacity, and because the major leagues were on strike, the eyes of the entire baseball world were focused on Pawtucket. The Paw Sox won 3-2 in the 33rd on Dave Koza's bases-loaded single. The final totals of 8 hours 55 minutes elapsed time and 8 hours 25 minutes game time are modern baseball records, and 33 innings is still the all-time professional record.

Momentoes of this historic game are now buried in a time capsule beneath the field, where they join the 5-ton truck that in 1942 sank without a trace into the swampy outfield while McCoy was being built by the WPA.

#### **27. LONGEST DOUBLEHEADER MARATHON: 35 INNINGS IN NORTH CAROLINA**

The most interesting doubleheader marathon was a 30-inning extravaganza held at San Dieg's Jack Murphy Stadium Sep 24, 1971. Houston took the opener 2-1 in 21 innings, and the second game began at one minute after Midnight. At 2:15 AM, with the score tied 4-4 and one aboard in the bottom of the ninth, swirling soupy fog engulfed Mission Valley as Nate Colbert hit a fly ball right to Astros center fielder Cesar Cedeno, who promptly lost the ball in a fog bank. With two on base, and the remaining 100 fans of an original crowd of 6339 going berserk, even though they could hardly see the field, the Padres stood on the brink of victory, but the umps halted play, hoping the fog would lift.

After a 14-minute delay, during which it became apparent the fog was not going anywhere soon, the umpires resumed play. Ollie Brown promptly brought an end to the evening's festivities by hitting the first pitch for an RBI single to right. Right fielder Jim Wynn told reporters later that not only did he never see the ball, he couldn't even see his own infielders. Radio listeners back in Houston, where it was 4:29 AM, could not believe their ears!

The longest major league doubleheader was the 32-inning day-into-night affair described above, in which Willie Mays played center AND shortstop for the Giants at Shea May 31, 1964. The Giants swept the Mets, 5-3 in the opener and 8-6 in the nightcap in 23 innings. 8000 fans from the original crowd of 57,037 stayed until the bitter end at 11:25 PM.

The longest doubleheader ever played was a North Carolina State League twinbill Jul 5, 1915 in the Research Triangle of Chapel Hill, Durham, and Raleigh. The Raleigh Capitals downed the Durham Bulls 3-2 in 14 innings in the a.m. game at Raleigh. Then the two teams bussed over to Durham for the p.m. game, which was called a 2-2 tie after 21 innings, making a total of 35 innings for the day.

Two other minor league doubleheaders have gone 30 or more innings. On May 6, 1928, the Sacramento Senators and Oakland Oaks split a 31-inning PCL doubleheader at Oaks Park in Emeryville, with the Senators taking the opener 5-2, and the Oaks grabbing the nightcap 7-6 in 22 innings. And as our nation prepared to celebrate its 200 th birthday, on May 30, 1976, the Burlington Bees swept a 30-inning Midwest League doubleheader from the hometown Waterloo Royals. Both games went extra innings, with the Bees taking both the lidlifter 4-3 in 22 innings, and the late game by an identical score in 8 innings.

A list of all doubleheader marathons going 26 or more innings is given in Appendix 7.

#### **28. LONGEST TRIPLE/QUADRUPLE/SEXTUPLEHEADERS: 47 INNINGS IN MANCHESTER**

I have come across 18 occasions involving three or more games in one day. Amazingly, 14 of the 18 were sweeps! The odds on that must be extremely low! Eleven of 15 tripleheaders were sweeps. The three major league ones were in the NL. In Brooklyn, Sep 1, 1890, the Dodgers swept three from Pittsburgh, 10-9, 3-2, and 8-4, a total of 27 innings. In Baltimore, Sep 7, 1896, the Orioles swept three from Louisville, 4-3, 9-1, and 12-1 in 8 innings, a total of 26 innings. And in Pittsburgh, Oct 2, 1920, the Pirates lost 2 out of 3 to Cincinnati, losing the first two 13-4 and 7-3, and winning the third 6-0 when it was called due to darkness at 6 PM after 6 innings, a total of 24 innings.

There have been eight minor league tripleheaders. Seven were sweeps. On Aug 25, 1890, in the Western Association at Athletic Park in Minneapolis, the hometown Millers swept three, a 3-0 win over the Lincoln Prohibitionists and then victories over the St. Paul Apostles by 9-3 and 14-7. On Sep 4, 1899, in the New England League, the Newport Colts swept three from the Taunton Herrings by 4-0, 12-4, and 11-1, a total of 27 innings. There were two tripleheaders Sep 22, 1902 in the American Association, both in the Twin Cities. The Louisville Colonels swept three from the Millers in Minneapolis at Nicollet Park by 9-0 (a forfeit because the Millers showed up late), 4-0, and 4-3; while across town, the Indianapolis Indians swept three from the Apostles in St. Paul at Lexington Park.

On Sep 5, 1910, there were two tripleheaders in the New England League, with the Lowell Tigers winning two and tying one vs. the Lawrence Colts by 3-1, 4-1, and a 4-4 tie in 7 innings, a total of 25 innings, the a.m. game was at Lawrence, the two p.m. games were at Lowell; and the Haverhill Hustlers losing to the hometown Worcester Busters 12-1 and then winning two by 2-1 and 4-2. Twenty days later, Sep 25, 1910, the Lansing Senators swept three from the Flint Vehics in the Southern Michigan League.

On Aug 12, 1972, the Cocoa Astros visited the Orlando Twins for a Florida State League game, but after one scoreless inning, it was suspended due to rain. It was decided to continue the suspended game the next day before a doubleheader in Cocoa. On Aug 13, 1972, Cocoa swept three from Orlando by 5-0, 2-0, and 4-3. Each game went seven innings, so 20 innings were played on Aug 13. Cocoa was the visiting team for the first and third games, and home for the second, which was a no-hitter pitched by 18-year old phenom Eleno Cuen from Cocorit, Mexico. The Astros won the last game for the sweep with four runs after one out in the top of the 7th.

Four tripleheaders have been played in college baseball. Georgia Tech came roaring out of the losers' bracket May 25, 2003 to win three games in a row

to win the ACC championship in Salem, Virginia. The last game took 10 innings, to set the all-time tripleheader record of 28 innings. Morris Brown lost three in a row in Hialeah, Florida at the Florida Memorial HBCU Invitational Tournament Jan 30, 2004. Harvard beat Air Force in Lubbock, Texas Mar 6, 2004 before dropping a pair to Texas Tech. And Lee took two out of three from St. Thomas in Miami Gardens, Florida Jan 29, 2005 in an NAIA tripleheader.

There has never been a major league quadrupleheader or longer. Both minor league quadrupleheaders were sweeps. In the Western Association, Sep 15, 1889 in Sioux City, Iowa, the home town Corn Huskers swept four from the St. Joseph Clay Eaters by 6-1, 15-7, 12-5, and 7-4, two games before and two games after lunch, with the first three make-up games taking five innings each and the fourth game taking seven innings, a total of 22 innings. On Sep 20, 1903, in the Hudson River League, the Hudson Marines swept four from the Poughkeepsie Colts by 2-1, 6-4, 3-1, and 4-2.

There has been just one minor league sextupleheader, again a sweep! In Manchester, New Hampshire, Sep 4, 1899, in the New England League, the home town Manchesters swept six from the Portland Phenoms by 14-7, 12-8, 12-2, 8-4, 9-1, and a 9-0 forfeit. They played two games before lunch, and four afterwards. Portland walked off the field and forfeited after two innings in the sixth game to protest the umpire's decision to eject one of their players, but the first five games lasted nine innings each, a total of 47 innings for the sextupleheader. The six losses in one day constituted over 15% of the Phenoms' losses for the year, as they won the league title with a 61-39 record.

A list of all tripleheaders, quadrupleheaders, and sextupleheaders is given in Appendix 8.

## **29. LONGEST MARATHONS WHICH BROKE NO RECORDS: DON'T WRECK EVERYTHING!**

Two 27-inning minor league games, although tied for third longest minor league game ever, have received no attention whatsoever because they were played after the Pawtucket 33-inning marathon in 1981 and therefore broke no records.

The first one was a three-day long thriller at MacArthur Stadium in Syracuse, one of only three minor league parks which have hosted three marathons. On Jun 19, 1985, the Pawtucket Paw Sox and Syracuse Chiefs played 22 innings. The game was suspended at 1:07 AM after the Chiefs loaded the bases in the bottom of the 22nd but failed to score.

The next night was rainy. After a 13-minute rain delay in the top of the 23rd, and another lasting 50 minutes in the bottom of the 24th, the game was suspended a second time at 9:05 PM due to rain after 23 ½ innings. After 3 ½ more innings Jun 21, the Paw Sox finally won 3-1 at 7:31 PM, and the regularly scheduled game was rained out. Total game time: 7 hours 7 minutes.

What makes this game even more amazing is it was the second time in just over a week the Syracuse Chiefs had lost a three-day marathon! On Jun 10, just nine days earlier, the Chiefs-Clippers game in Columbus was suspended after 20 innings. It was rained out Jun 11, and the Chiefs lost 8-7 in the 21st Jun 12.

Three years later, Jun 24, 1988 at Athletic Stadium in Burlington, North

Carolina, the Bluefield Orioles (Baby Birds) came to town for an Appalachian League game against the hometown Indians. When the Orioles finally won by a score of 3-2, the game had taken 8 hours 16 minutes, it was 3:27 AM, and the crowd of 2204 fans had dwindled to just either 84 or 50. Why the uncertainty on the remaining crowd at the end?

Apparently, the sportswriters were sleepy because they had remarkably different accounts. Craig Holt of the Burlington Times-News counted 84 fans at the end, but wrote incorrectly that the finish had been at 3:37 AM rather than at 3:27 AM. Dale Mullins of the Bluefield Daily Telegraph counted 50 fans at the end, and got the finish time correct as 3:27 AM, but wrote incorrectly that the game had taken place in Raleigh rather than in Burlington.

As for whether such games should be suspended or played to completion, I wholeheartedly agree with the sentiments of Baby Birds manager Glenn Gulliver on late-night marathons. After the game he told reporters, "I do not favor suspending games, no matter how long they take. That would wreck everything. Once the game gets so far along, and you still have a chance to win, you don't want to quit. You want to go until somebody wins." Amen! Suspension will always be a bad idea that wrecks everything. Let the ballplayers play on to a conclusion!

### **30. LONGEST MARATHON: 45 INNINGS FOR THE EMPEROR'S CUP IN MITO**

Outside the U.S. there have been 55 marathons played. Latin America has the most, with 26: six in Cuba, 11 in Mexico, four in Nicaragua, and five in Puerto Rico. Canada has nine. Asia has 16, fifteen in Japan and one in Taiwan; Australia has three; and Oceania has one, in Guam. Africa and Europe have yet to experience a marathon. The longest game in Africa thus far was 14 innings between Ghana and Togo; the longest in Europe was 17 innings when Biemme Fortitudo Bologna of Italy defeated Chesterfield of San Marino 12-10. A list of these games is given in Appendix 9, along with the longest extra inning games by region.

On May 24, 1942, just eleven days before the Battle of Midway (Jun 4-7) began, Taiyo and Nagoya of the Japanese Professional Baseball Federation struggled to a 28-inning 4-4 tie, setting a new organized baseball record. Seventeen years later, May 2, 1959, Nippon Pharmaceuticals defeated Kurashiki Rayon 2-1 in a 29-inning industrial league game. So Japan had some experience with marathon games.

But when play began Sep 20, 1983 in the title game of the 38th annual Emperor's Cup Nan-shiki Tournament at Ibaraki-Mito Prefectural Stadium in Mito, Japan, nobody had the least idea what lay ahead! The game between Light Manufacturing (Raito Kogyo) of Tokyo and Tanaka Hospital (Byouin) of Miyazaki was to begin at 9 AM. The first pitch came ten minutes early at 8:50 AM. The local Mito Band was to play at the award ceremony after the game, and was asked to be ready at 11 AM. As Noon came and went, the teams were locked in a scoreless tie. After the 25th, plate umpire Choshu told the teams to take a 30-minute break.

The players refused. Choshu joined his fellow umps Igari, Sakurai, and Suzuki for a short 6-minute break, and then the game moved on to the 26th. In the 35th inning, both teams pushed across one run, so the marathon continued. Finally, the game concluded at 5:15 PM after Light Manufacturing scored in the top of the 45th to win 2-1. Final totals: 1,029 pitches and 8 hours 19

minutes of baseball! Including the 6-minute delay in the 26th, the game actually lasted 8 hours 25 minutes.

Excluding Massachusetts Rules games and games planned as marathons to raise funds for charity, this is the longest game by innings in the history of baseball. The Mito Band finally got to play after waiting around for over six hours.

### **31. HOW MANY GAMES GO INTO EXTRA INNINGS?**

How many games go into extra innings? My detailed research into various lengths of major league games indicates a little less than 6% went into extra innings in the 1800's, when late afternoon 4 PM starting times resulted in many games being called due to darkness before they ever had the opportunity to go into extra innings, and between 9% and 10% have gone into extra innings in the 1900's and 2000's. Our theoretical model predicts 10.3% of all games should go into extra innings.

To get a good empirical estimate of the percentage of extra inning games before the current night ball era, I began with the first two decades of major league baseball, from 1871 to 1889. For these 19 years, in the National Association (1871-75), National League (1876-89), American Association (1882-89), and Union Association (1884), there were 10,790 regular season games, plus 50 World Series games (1884-89), a total of 10,840 games in 1871-89. 126 of these games or 1.2% were ties. Because of darkness or weather, 662 or 6.1% of these games were official games taking less than 9 innings: 43 were forfeits, 55 went 5 innings, 114 went 6 innings, 200 went 7 innings, 250 went 8 innings. 307 games went 10 innings, 158 went 11 innings, 69 went 12 innings, 43 went 13 innings, 24 went 14 innings, 8 went 15 innings, 6 went 16 innings, and one went 18 innings. A total of 616 or 5.68% out of 10,840 went extra innings.

Many more games in this period would have gone extra innings had they had the time to do so, but lack of ballpark lights and late afternoon starting times conspired to limit the number of extra inning contests. So the fact that a little less than 6% of major league games went extra innings could be expected to apply only until either starting times were advanced to earlier in the afternoon or until lights were placed in ballparks.

Before I was aware of Dave Smith's database on extra inning games, to get a good estimate of the percentage of extra inning games in the recent night ball era, I decided to do a 100% inventory of every major league game in the 1980's. In that decade (1980-89), in the American and National Leagues, 20,337 regular season games were played, plus 19 League Division Series (LDS) games, 99 League Championship Series (LCS) games, and 59 World Series games, a total of 20,514 games played in the 1980's. 866 games went 10 innings, 471 went 11 innings, 274 went 12 innings, 150 went 13 innings, 88 went 14 innings, 39 went 15 innings, 29 went 16 innings, 19 went 17 innings, 10 went 18 innings, 3 went 19 innings, 4 went 20 innings, one went 21 innings, two went 22 innings, and one went 25 innings. A total of 1,957 or 9.54% out of 20,514 went extra innings.

I then discovered Smith's work with Retrosheet major league data. In Table 2 of his 2004 SABR convention presentation entitled "Coming from Behind: Patterns of Scoring and Relation to Winning", Smith took data for 73 seasons (1901, 1904, 1909-10, 1912-13, 1918, 1936, 1938-42, and 1944-2003), and created a database of 2,259,116 innings in 122,906 games. 413 or 0.3% were

ties. Because of darkness or weather, 1209 or 1.0% were official games taking less than 9 innings: 183 went 5 innings, 295 went 6, 384 went 7, and 347 went 8. The number of ties and the number of official games lasting less than 9 innings are both significantly less relative to the 1870's and 1880's, both because starting times had advanced to earlier in the afternoon, and because the vast majority of games in these 73 seasons were played in ballparks with lights. Both factors allowed games to continue to a decision that back in the 1800's would have been called due to darkness. 5060 games went 10 innings, 2843 went 11, 1588 went 12, 881 went 13, 521 went 14, 268 went 15, 163 went 16, 88 went 17, 43 went 18, 25 went 19, 13 went 20, 8 went 21, 6 went 22, 2 went 23, 2 went 24, and 2 went 25. 11,513 or 9.37% out of 122,906 went into extra innings.

This database spans both the period before lights and the period after lights, so it would be inappropriate to use the 9.37% figure to predict the percentage of extra inning games either before or after lights were installed in ballparks. To do this, we need to break down Smith's database year-by-year and make a judgment call on what year to use as the dividing point between the day-ball and night-ball eras. This is a difficult judgment because lights were introduced into major league parks gradually from 1935 to 1948, were infrequently used at first, and were hardly ever used during World War II (1942-45). I chose to use 1948 as the dividing line and as the last year of the day-ball era, with the night-ball era beginning in 1949.

Smith's data was thus broken down into two eras. During the day-ball era through 1948, there are 18 seasons, with 2005 extra inning games of a total of 21,884 games, or 9.16% extra inning games. Lowest datapoints are 7.1% in 1948 and 7.2% in 1901. Highest datapoints are 12.3% in 1918 and 11.9% in 1942. This is considerably higher than 5.68% for 1871-89. The difference can be attributed to the fact games started later in the 1800's than in the 1900's. In the 1800's, games usually started at 4 PM, whereas starting times in the 1900's gradually moved up from 4 PM, at first to 3 PM, and then later on to 2 PM and 1 PM.

The night-ball era for Smith's data extends 1949-2003. There are 55 seasons, with 9508 extra inning games of a total of 101,022 games, or 9.41% extra inning games. Lowest datapoints are 7.9% in 1950 and again in 1999. Highest datapoints are 13.1% in 1957 and 11.3% in 1960. This compares very well with the 9.54% I had for 1980-89.

Based on this data, it seems clear night ball did not make a very big difference in the number of extra inning games after all! What made the difference was moving starting times up from 4 PM to 3 PM and then to 2 PM and then to 1 PM, eliminating most chances a game would be called due to darkness before it had the opportunity to go into extra innings.

An interesting fact is the average for games since 2000 is down to 8.2%. The number of extra inning games has been declining steadily since the 1960's when it was at 9.9%: 1970's 9.7%, 1980's 9.7%, 1990's 9.0%, 2000's 8.2%. This recent decline in extra inning games can be attributed to the fact we have been having significantly higher scoring games since the early 1980's.

Based on this research, the best empirical estimate for the percentage of extra inning games is: 5.68% in the 1800's, 9.17% in the 1900's through 1948 day-ball era when all or most games were played in daytime, and 9.41% during the night-ball era from 1949 through the present. The best theoretical

estimate, given by our mathematical model, is 10.3% of all games should go into extra innings.

### **32. VISITING TEAM ADVANTAGE IN MARATHON-LAND?**

Of all the 352 marathons found so far, 46 have been in the major leagues, 173 in the minor leagues, and 133 in the "other" category (43 school games, 47 amateur games, 39 international games, and 4 women's games). One of the most surprising facts about marathons is that a statistically significant majority have been won by the visiting team. There have been 50 ties, and for 88 of the games, it is unclear whether the visitor or home team won, either because the game was played at a neutral site or because we do not know where the game was played. In the remaining 214 games, 122 or 57% were won by the visiting team. Is there a hidden "visiting team advantage" lurking somewhere in the Kingdom of Marathons?

That the visiting team wins 57% of all marathons needs to be considered in light of Dave Smith's aforementioned 2004 study. Smith asserts, based on data from 73 major league seasons, that the home team scores more than the visiting team in each of the first 8 innings, but visiting teams score more than the home team in the ninth inning and in each extra inning, since as soon as the home team scores enough to win in these innings, the game is over and the home team stops batting with less than three outs.

Although visiting teams score more runs per inning than home teams from the ninth inning on, Smith is **NOT** implying visiting teams win more often than do home teams. But my finding that 57% of marathons are won by the visiting team and only 43% are won by the home team is a statistically significant finding. At this point, I have no explanation for why visiting teams win marathons 14% more often than do home teams.

### **33. LONGEST RAIN DELAY: 8 HOURS 12 MINUTES**

If one loves long marathon baseball games lasting 20 or more innings, what better to accompany them than a long long rain delay! The most time due to rain delays in a Massachusetts Rules marathon was 2 hours 50 minutes, plus some, in the 172-inning 1860 game cited earlier. The game endured two delays in the bottom of the 13th, 20 minutes Sep 25 and 2 hours 30 minutes Sep 26, and two more delays of unknown duration on Oct 4 and 5, both in the top of the 173rd, which was never played.

The longest rain delay to ever accompany a non-Massachusetts Rules marathon was 2 hours in the top of the 13th on May 15, 1981 at Disch-Falk Field in Austin. The Texas Longhorns defeated the Rice Owls 7-6 in 20 innings in a game suspended due to the long rain delay at 1:15 AM, and then finished the next afternoon. The second longest rain delay in a marathon was 1 hour 46 minutes in the bottom of the 11th Sep 7, 1990 at Greer Stadium in Nashville. The Omaha Royals defeated the Nashville Sounds 8-7 in 20 innings at 3:50 AM. Old Comiskey saw the longest rain delay in a major league marathon, as the top of the 14th was delayed 17 minutes in a 21-inning game May 26, 1973.

Two marathons were delayed for reasons other than rain. At San Antonio, the Apr 29, 1960 24-inning game vs. Rio Grande Valley was delayed by a scoreboard fire in the bottom of the 23rd. And the Apr 18, 1981 start of the epic 33-inning Rochester at Pawtucket struggle was delayed for a half hour by power failure in the outfield lights.

Old Comiskey holds the record for the longest major league rain delay ever -- seven hours 23 minutes on Aug 12, 1990. The game vs. the Rangers never even got started. It was finally called off at 8:58 PM, and then played five days later on Aug 17 in Texas. The minor league record is held by Yogi Berra Stadium in Little Falls, New Jersey, where the start of the Aug 14, 2000 Northern League game was delayed by rain for seven hours 6 minutes. The Catskill Cougars eventually downed the New Jersey Jackals 6-1, finishing up at 11:06 PM.

The longest rain delay ever recorded occurred during the NCAA tournament at MacKenzie Field, Holyoke, Massachusetts on May 24, 1978. In the top of the seventh, with the Delaware Blue Hens leading the Harvard Crimson 1-0, the umps waited eight hours twelve minutes, from 1:50 PM until 10:02 PM, before calling the game off. A list of all delays lasting 3 or more hours can be found at Appendix 10.

#### **34. EMPIRICAL RESULTS FOR MAJOR LEAGUE MARATHONS**

Since major league baseball began in 1871, and continuing through 2004, there have been 46 major league marathons lasting 20 or more innings out of a total of 197,446 games played: 26 in the NL, 18 in the AL, one in the Negro National League, and one in the Negro American League. The empirical statistical probability therefore that a major league game will take 20 or more innings is  $46 / 197,446 = 1 / 4,294$ , or 0.02329 %. This indicates a marathon should take place roughly every 4,294 games.

In 2004, with each of 30 teams playing 81 home games, there were 2,430 regular season games, plus 34 (it could have been anywhere from 24 to 41) post-season games, so there were 2,464 games. Assuming 2,464 major league games per season, a major league marathon taking 20 or more innings can empirically be expected to come along roughly every  $4,294 / 2,464 = 1.74$  seasons. So we should empirically expect a marathon in the future a little more often than once every other season.

What have we actually experienced recently in the major leagues? Over the past 25 years, from 1980 through 2004, we have three separate eras. For 1980 through 1992, before the Rockies and Marlins, we should have expected a marathon to occur every 2.0 seasons; for 1993-96, before the Diamondbacks and Devil Rays, it was every 1.9 seasons; and since 1997, it has been every 1.7 seasons. Over the entire past 25 years, the weighted average is 1.9, so we should expect  $25 / 1.9 = 13$  marathons, but we had only 11. Over the past 10 years, from 1995 through 2004, the weighted average is 1.8, so we should expect  $10 / 1.8 = 6$  marathons, but we actually have had only one, with an 8-year drought 1995-2002. The Cards defeated the Marlins 7-6 in 20 innings in Miami Apr 27, 2003.

#### **35. EXTRA INNING AND MARATHON SCORING RECORDS: WHO WON IN ELYRIA, OHIO?**

The highest scoring major league extra inning game is the 18-inning Athletics 18-17 win over the Indians in Cleveland Jul 10, 1932, when Jack Burnett got nine hits and Eddie Rommel relieved in the 2nd for the A's and went the rest of the way for the win, still the longest-ever relief effort in major league history.

Most runs scored by both teams in extra innings of a major league game is 13, both in games won by New York NL teams. On Jun 15, 1929 at Forbes Field, the Giants and Pirates were tied at 11 after 9 innings, both scored one in the

11th, then the Giants scored 8 in the 14th while the Pirates only scored 3. Final score: New York 20 Pittsburgh 15. On Jul 4, 1985 at Atlanta Stadium, the Mets and Braves were tied at 8 after 9 innings, both scored two in the 13th, and both scored one in the 18th. Then the Mets scored 5 in the 19th, while the Braves scored only 2. Final score: New York 16 Atlanta 13 at 3:55 AM. The post-game Fourth of July fireworks show was faithfully carried live back to New York viewers from 4:01 AM to 4:12 AM by the Mets WOR-TV broadcast team, which included Tim McCarver, who was no doubt recalling his lack of lightning speed at 3:15 AM in Philadelphia a decade ago on Sep 25, 1975 which allowed Rusty Staub of the Mets to throw him out at the plate, thus ending another game that had been threatening to go until dawn!

The PCL Edmonton Trappers scored the most runs ever in one extra inning in a minor league game Jul 27, 2004 in Memphis, when they defeated the Redbirds 15-3 with 12 runs in the 12th. The Rangers scored the most runs ever in one extra inning in a major league game Jul 3, 1983 in Oakland, when they defeated the A's 16-4 with 12 runs in the 15th. Exactly one hundred years earlier, Sep 6, 1883, the Cubs scored the most runs ever in one inning in a major league game when they scored 18 in the 7th inning.

The highest scoring major league marathon is the 21-inning Padres 11-8 win over the Expos in Montreal May 21, 1977. The record for the highest scoring minor league marathon was set Jul 8, 1938, when the visiting Fulton Eagles of the Kitty (Kentucky-Illinois-Tennessee) League scored five in the 20th to defeat the Paducah Indians 14-9 at Hook Park.

The record for the highest scoring "other" category marathon was set Aug 1 and 8, 1932, when the K of P's A Team and the K of P's B Team battled through two weekends and 22 innings in Elyria, Ohio, and we still don't know yet who won! On Aug 1, the two teams were tied 19-19 when the game was called on account of darkness. The game was continued Aug 8 and was won by one of the teams in the 22nd, but we don't know the final score, or how many innings had been played when the game was suspended, or which team eventually won.

Of course we could also count games played under Massachusetts Rules. Then our highest scoring marathon would be Upton's 100-56 victory over Medway in Worcester Oct 11-12, 1859. But if we're going to count that game, we might as well count planned marathons too. So the record for highest scoring marathon is the African Gray Birds' 127-110 victory over the Red-Eyed Nites in the Women's Marathon 24 Hours for Africa in Tucson Oct 18-19, 2003.

### **36. DATABASES ON RUN PRODUCTION PER INNING**

To predict how many games will go into extra innings, and how many extra innings they will last, I first had to determine how many runs are scored in each inning. I went through every available box score for all games taking 20 or more innings, and recorded the number of runs scored in the 10th inning, 11th, 12th, etc. through the 45th inning. This created a database of 5,298 innings in 206 games. I did the same for every major league extra inning game played during the 1980's. This created an additional database of 8,952 innings in 1,957 games.

I then discovered Dave Smith's much larger database, mentioned earlier, with 2,259,116 innings in 122,906 games. It soon became obvious Smith's database is much more thorough than mine for innings 1-19. However, since my database on 20 and more inning games is 100% complete for innings 20-45 and Smith's is

not, it is also obvious my database for innings 20-45 is much more thorough than Smith's.

I now had two valuable databases. In the first, I had a complete database for all games lasting 20 or more innings. In this database, one sees what one would expect intuitively. Run production in marathons going 20 or more innings is very low in innings 10-19, which is why these games tend to stay tied and last until at least the 20th inning. The second database, consisting of Smith's data for innings 1-19 and my database for innings 20-45, is the best available database to predict how many runs teams will score in any given inning. These two databases are given in Appendix 11.

Six very interesting facts arise out of these two databases.

First, run production is significantly higher in the first inning than in any other inning. Whereas teams score 0.487 runs per inning, the visiting team scores 0.514 and the home team scores 0.607 runs in the first inning. Higher scoring in the first inning is expected because this is the only inning during a game in which teams are assured their best batters, at the top of the order, will all bat together.

Second, the often cited "home field advantage" is true for innings 1-8, with the home team scoring an average of 0.048 runs more per inning than the visiting team. As cited above, this home field advantage is by far most prominent in the first inning, when the home team scores on average 0.093 runs more than the visiting team.

Third, what appears to be a "visiting team advantage" exists from the ninth inning on, with the home team scoring an average of 0.051 runs less than the visiting team in innings 9-45. Again, though, after some reflection, this is reasonable because after the home team scores enough runs to win the game from the bottom of the ninth inning on, the game is over and so the home team stops batting. This is not really a case of a "visiting team advantage". A very interesting variation shows this difference is much less in the 9th inning (0.035 runs) than in innings 10-45 (0.124 runs). I have no explanation for this.

Fourth, run production is much lower in extra innings than in innings 1-9. This makes sense because extra inning games are usually low scoring contests. High scoring games rarely go into extra innings, whereas there are many 1-0 and 2-1 extra inning games. It is statistically much less likely for the Philadelphia Athletics 49-33 victory over the Troy Haymakers Jun 28, 1871 (highest scoring major league game ever) or the Cubs 26-23 win over the Phillies Aug 25, 1922 (highest scoring NL game ever) to remain tied and go into extra innings.

Fifth, my data limited to only games going 20 or more innings shows dramatically lower run production in innings 10-19 than does Smith's data based on all games. For example, Smith's data shows runs per inning of 0.392 in the 15th inning, vs. my data showing 0.029 in the 15th. Smith's data for innings 10 and 12-17 is more than ten times higher than my data for these same innings. Smith's data averages out to 0.387 runs per inning for innings 10-19. My data, on the other hand, averages out to only 0.026 runs per inning for innings 10-19. We can conclude marathons lasting 20 or more innings produce 93% fewer runs during innings 10-19 than do extra inning games in general.

Sixth, other than higher scoring in the first inning, all scoring variations, both between visiting and home teams, and also between different innings, are so minor they may be ignored statistically. An average game involves each team scoring 0.487 runs per inning. Assuming the visiting and home teams each win roughly half the time, there will be an average of 8.75 innings (17.5 half-innings) per game in a game that does not go into extra innings, or a total of  $0.487 \times 17.5 = 8.52$  runs per game. Variations such as the home team scoring 0.048 more runs per inning in innings 1-8, while interesting, are statistically insignificant. When evaluating the possibility of whether an average game, involving between 8 and 9 runs, will go into extra innings, this 0.048 runs per inning is only  $0.048 / 8.52 = 0.0056$ , a statistically irrelevant half of one percent of the total runs in the game.

### 37. MATHEMATICAL MODEL OF EXTRA INNINGS

Based upon this data, Dr. Darren Glass, Professor of Mathematics at Columbia University, and I constructed a mathematical theory of extra innings. We began the creation of the theoretical model by assuming there are no meaningful statistical differences between offensive production from the tenth inning forward in an extra inning game. Our assumption that offensive production in any given inning, starting with the 10th, is independent of offensive production in any other inning allows us to use the statistical definition of independent events. If two events are statistically independent, then the probability of both occurring is equal to the probability of one event occurring times the probability of the other event occurring.

To establish our model, we made some definitions. Let  $n$  = the number of innings in an extra inning game. Let  $P(n)$  = the Probability an extra inning game will last  $n$  innings. Let  $T$  = the probability a game is Tied after 9 innings = the probability a game will go into extra innings.

We previously determined empirically that  $T$  was 5.68% in the 1800's, 9.17% in 1900-48, and 9.41% in 1949-2004. Our theoretical model predicts this should be 10.3%. There are most likely several factors contributing to the discrepancy between our predicted theoretical value and the actual empirical data. In our estimation, the biggest one is that to build our model we assumed both teams are average, whereas in the real world one team may be above average and the other team may be below average, which would decrease the probability of a game going into extra innings. For details on this issue, see our article in the upcoming issue of "By the Numbers" published by the SABR Statistical Analysis Committee. For predictions regarding future games, we use  $T = 0.103$ .

Let  $k$  = the probability both teams will score the same number of runs in one inning. This is where we use the extensive databases mentioned earlier. My database results in the value of  $k$  being 0.5841. We checked additional databases (see the Bibliography on the website) from which it is possible to obtain an empirical value for  $k$ , including GR Lindsey's 0.5696 for all innings in 1958, Lindsey's 0.5895 for just extra innings in 1958, Lindsey's 0.5552 for all innings in 1959, Lindsey's 0.5479 for just extra innings in 1959, and Kevin Woolner's 0.5606 for 1980-98.

Having made the required definitions, now let's separate an extra inning baseball game into three separate events. The FIRST part is the beginning, or first nine innings. The SECOND part is the middle, from the tenth inning through the next to the last inning, the  $(n - 1)$  th inning. The THIRD part is

the last inning, the  $n$  th inning. Since these three events are statistically independent,  $P(n)$  = the probability of a game going  $n$  innings will be the probability of the first part occurring times the probability of the second part occurring times the probability of the third part occurring.

The probability of the first part of a future game occurring, as we have already discussed, is empirically  $T = 0.0941$ , and theoretically  $T = 0.103$ . For predictions regarding future games, we use  $T = 0.103$ .

The probability of the second part of the game occurring is  $k$  times itself for as many times as there are innings in the middle part of the game, from the tenth inning through the  $(n - 1)$  th inning. The number of innings in this middle part of the game is  $(n - 1) - 9 = (n - 10)$ . We have to multiply  $k$  times itself  $(n - 10)$  times, so the probability of the second part of the game occurring is  $k^{(n - 10)}$ .

The probability of the third part of the game occurring is trickier than the previous two probabilities. If  $k$  = the probability both teams score the same number of runs in an inning, then  $(1 - k)$  has to be the probability both teams do **NOT** score the same number of runs in an inning, because the combined probability that they do and they do NOT score the same number of runs in an inning must add up to one. Now all we need to do to get our theoretical model is to string together the three different probabilities of our three independent events, and multiply them together:

$$P(n) = T k^{(n - 10)} (1 - k).$$

Looking at our model, it is important to do some sensitivity analysis. If  $k$  increases,  $P(n)$  also increases. As the probability increases that both teams score the same number of runs in the same inning, extra inning games tend to go longer. That makes sense. How does changing  $k$  change the possibility a game will go exactly 20 innings? Let's look at the different possible values for  $k$  cited above. The lowest value for  $k$  cited was 0.5479, using Lindsey's work on extra inning games in 1959. Using this value for  $k$ ,  $P(20)$  = the probability of a game going 20 innings is 0.011 %. The highest value for  $k$  cited was 0.5895, using Lindsey's work on extra inning games in 1958. Using this value for  $k$ ,  $P(20)$  = the probability of a game going 20 innings is 0.021 %, or double the probability for the lowest value of  $k$ . So we need to be very careful to get the correct value of  $k$ , since the probability of a game going  $n$  number of innings is very sensitive to the value we use for  $k$ . That is why I took all the time to gather all the data on runs scored per inning.

Getting the correct value of  $k$  is crucial to success of our model. Another important example of sensitivity analysis for the value of  $k$  is examining how  $k$  varies as offensive strength changes. Data gathered by Woolner, as well as common sense, suggests offensive powerhouse teams have a different scoring distribution than teams scoring few runs. One of the key features of our model is it takes as an input the average number of runs per inning that each team scores. As we would expect, the model agrees with Woolner's data showing the probability that two teams score the same number of runs per inning goes down as offensive production increases, since one team is more likely to have a "breakout" inning and score a high number of runs. This also indicates the number of extra inning games and their lengths should increase during eras when scoring is low, such as the Dead Ball Era (which did in fact happen, see Appendix 1).

If we assume teams are of equal offensive strength, the value of  $k$  varies from 0.373 when both teams score 1.0 run per inning, to 0.553 when both teams score 0.5 runs per inning, up to 0.866 when both teams score only 0.1 runs per inning. From now on, it will be assumed both teams score 0.487 runs per inning, based on Smith's data, the best available empirical data. This choice yields a value of  $k$  of 0.5559.

Our theoretical model can be used to predict several things. First, it predicts the theoretical probability a game will take  $x$  number of innings to play. What are the odds a game will go exactly 26 innings, or it will go 26 or more innings? Second, it predicts the theoretical probability a game of  $x$  number of innings will take place in the next  $y$  number of years. Does a 26-inning game come along every 50 years, or every 100 years, or how often? What is the probability of a record-breaking 27-inning major league game taking place in the next 25 years? What are the odds of a record-breaking 34-inning minor league game taking place before 2050?

To accomplish this task, we have to make some decisions. Do we count ties, fake ties, thrown out games, forfeits, playoffs, World Series? I have done so. How many major league games have ever been played? I have calculated this number through 2004 as 197,446. This includes all games in the Negro Leagues, which I count as major leagues. How many minor league games have ever been played? Using the Sumner and Johnson/Wolff books as my guideline (see the Bibliography), I have calculated this number through 2004 as 1,405,188. How many games in the "other" category have been played, including school games, amateur games, international games, and women's games? I have estimated this number as ten times the number of minor league games, or 14,051,880.

Thus, my estimate of the total number of baseball games ever played through 2004, at all levels and at all locations world-wide, is  $197,446 + 1,405,188 + 14,051,880 = 15,654,514$ . It should be noted many "other" category games are scheduled for only 6 or 7 innings, and some minor league games are scheduled for only 7 innings.

I believe 100% of all major league marathons taking 20 or more innings have been discovered. The only possible exception to this may be that there could be one or more Negro League marathons yet to be discovered. For the purposes of this research, however, I assume all major league marathons have been found.

This is definitely **NOT** the case for games in the minor leagues and the "other" category. For minor league games, despite intensive research over a 41-year period, I have perhaps found only 50% of the minor league marathons which have actually been played, due to incomplete and missing league records. And for the "other" category, due to lack of media coverage, I have perhaps found only 5%. Therefore, the empirical statistical probabilities for marathons developed in this article for all games at all levels are based on major league data.

Assuming the percentage of marathons in the majors, minors, and "other" categories is the same, a reasonable assumption, we can estimate the number of marathons missing from my research. A good estimate of the number of minor league marathons through 2004 would be 1,405,188 times 0.02329 %, the percentage of such games in the majors, or 327. Since I have only found 173 marathons in the minors through the 2004 season, that means that I may be missing  $327 - 173 = 154$  minor league marathons. This would indicate I have found 53% of minor league marathons, and am still missing 47% of them.

We can estimate the number of total marathons through 2004 to be 15,654,514 times 0.02329 %, or 3,646. Since I have only found 352 marathons through 2004 in all categories, I may be missing  $3,646 - 352 = 3,294$  marathons in all categories. Since the number of missing minor league marathons was estimated to be 154, and the number of missing major league marathons is assumed to be zero, the number of missing marathons in the "other" category would be estimated to be  $3,294 - 154 = 3,140$ .

We can estimate the number of "other" category marathons through 2004 to be 14,051,880 times 0.02329 %, or 3,273. Since I have only found 133 marathons in the "other" category through 2004, I may be missing  $3,273 - 133 = 3,140$  "other" category marathons, which is exactly equal to our previous estimate in the above paragraph. This indicates I may have found roughly 4% of "other" category marathons.

Certain aspects of baseball strategy affecting the length of an extra inning game are not included in our theoretical model. These aspects include such managerial strategies as going for a tie at home and a win on the road, frequency of using relief pitchers, cold vs. warm weather which can depress or elevate the average of 0.487 runs scored per inning, temperatures getting colder and colder as a night game progresses, and eras such as the Dead Ball Era when offensive production has been significantly different.

Using the model, we have calculated the theoretical chances of major league games going x innings. The fit between our theoretical data and actual empirical data seems very good. For example, our theoretical model predicts the probability of a major league game going exactly 10 innings should be 4.57%; actual data from 1871-2004 indicates it is actually 4.12%. Our model has predicted reality to within 0.45%, which is good. Similarly, our model predicts the probability of a major league game going 16 innings to be 0.135%; actual data shows it is actually 0.133%. Our model has predicted reality to within 0.002%, which again is good. Our model predicts the probability of a major league game going 22 innings to be 0.00398%; actual data shows it is actually 0.00405%. The fit between our model and the real world is surprisingly good!

Theoretical probabilities of a major league game going x innings are compared to empirical data in Appendix 12.

### **38. CONCLUSIONS ON THE RELATIVE "RARITY" OF RECORD-LONG GAMES**

So how "rare" are record-long marathons: Boston's 26 innings in the major league category in 1920, Pawtucket's 33 innings in the minor league category in 1981, and Mito, Japan's 45 innings in the "other" category (schools/amateur/international/women) in 1983? Our theoretical model predicts that the 26-inning major league record game is not as rare as empirical data would indicate, but that the 33-inning minor league record game and 45-inning "other" category record game are significantly more rare than empirical data would indicate.

The empirical record for a major league game is 26 innings. According to our theoretical model for the period 1871 (the beginning of the major leagues) through 2004, we should expect 57 major league marathons to have been played so far. In fact, there have been only 46.

We should expect a 50% chance to experience a major league game of 20 or more innings in any given season. We should expect 0.939 major league games, or almost one, to have gone 27 or more innings by now. In fact, we have not yet had such a game in 134 years of major league play. We should expect a 10.9% chance to see a major league game of 27 innings or more in any given decade. Since we have been waiting almost thirteen and a half decades now, it is not at all unrealistic to expect we could very soon have a major league game last 27 or more innings. So the 26-inning Boston game may be **NOT SO rare**. So far, so good. Our model is realistic, and fairly consistent with empirical data.

The empirical record for a minor league game is 33 innings. According to our theoretical model for the period 1877 (the beginning of the minor leagues) through 2004, we should expect 408 minor league marathons. As cited earlier, if the percentage of minor league games which are marathons is the same as the percentage of major league games which are marathons, or 0.02329%, then we should expect 327 minor league marathons. In fact, I have discovered 173 through 2004, or 42% of the number the model predicts, and 53% of the number to be expected if the percentage of games that are marathons is the same in the minors as in the majors. I had predicted I would find about 50% of minor league marathons.

The difference between the two numbers may possibly be attributed to the varying strengths of the teams. In other words, our theoretical model assumes more marathons than the actual number due to the fact that teams are not actually equal in strength. The theoretical model predicts we should have had 57 major league marathons but we have had only had 46. So the model predicts 11/46 or 23.9% too high. The theoretical model predicts we should have had 408 major league marathons but if the percentage is the same in the minor leagues as in the major leagues we should have had only had 327. So the model predicts 81/327 or 24.7% too high.

I do not understand why the two percentages are not exactly the same (23.9% vs. 24.7%), possibly due to rounding errors, but given our empirical data and our theoretical model, we could if we chose to do so, add a factor of  $1/1.239 = 0.807$  to our formula, so that the formula would change from  $P(n) = T k (n - 10) (1 - k)$  to  $P(n) = 0.807 T k (n - 10) (1 - k)$ . If we were to use this new adjusted formula, then we would be saying that the fact that teams are not both exactly average reduces the number of extra inning games by 19.3%. If we were to do this, then we would be adding a third empirical piece to what started out as a totally theoretical model. The first was T, or the fact that we empirically discovered that 9.48% of games go into extra innings. The second was k, or the fact that we empirically discovered that teams score the exact same number of runs in an inning 55.59% of the time. And if we were to add this "unequal strength factor", we would be adding a third, or the fact that we empirically discovered that because teams are of unequal strength only 80.7% as many games go into extra innings as would be the case if teams were of exactly equal strength. Since we are not certain that unequal strength is the total reason for the variation between our theoretical model and our empirical data, we have not added the 0.807 "unequal strength factor" to our model, but we may choose to do so in the future.

We should expect 6.68 minor league games to have gone 27 or more innings. In fact, we have had 6 such games, further indication our model is doing a good job of predicting reality. We should expect 0.087 minor league games to have gone 33 innings. In fact, we have had one such game, which means our actual count is 11.5 times the expected count. So the 33-inning Rochester at Pawtucket game may be **VERY rare** indeed.

We should expect a 99.3% chance we will have a minor league marathon of 20 or more innings in any given season, a 0.13% chance we will have a minor league game of 34 or more innings in any given season, a 1.32% chance of seeing a minor league game of 34 innings or more in any given decade, and a 9.4% chance of seeing a minor league game of 34 innings or more in a lifetime of 75 years.

The empirical record for an "other" category game is 45 innings. According to our theoretical model for the period through 2004, we should expect 3,789 "other" category marathons to have gone 20 or more innings. As cited earlier, if the percentage of "other" category games which are marathons is the same as the percentage of major league games which are marathons, or 0.02329%, then we should expect 3,273 "other" category marathons. In fact, I have discovered only 123 through 2004, or 3.2% of the number the model predicts, and 3.7% of the number to be expected if the percentage of games that are marathons is the same in the "other" category as in the majors. I had predicted I would find about 5% of "other" category marathons.

We should expect 0.000954 "other" category games to have gone 45 innings. In fact, we have had one game of 45 or more innings, which means our actual count of one is 1,048 times the expected count. We should expect 0.00000366 "other" category games to last 45 or more innings in a lifetime of 75 years. So the 45-inning Mito game may be **EXTREMELY rare** indeed!

Our model allows us to estimate the probability of games lasting a certain number of innings or longer in each of our three categories. This is an alternative method, and perhaps a more easily understood way to express how "rare" are marathons of a certain length. Let's use this approach to compare relative probabilities of breaking the current records for major league, minor league, and "other" category games.

There is a 50% chance we will see a major league game go 27 innings or more in the next 60 years. There is a 95% chance we will see a major league game go 27 innings or more in the next 260 seasons. So the 84-year old 26-inning major league record, while rare, is not so rare that we should not expect to see it possibly broken some day soon.

There is a 50% chance we will see a minor league game go 34 innings or longer in the next 523 years. There is a 95% chance we will see a minor league game go 34 innings or more in the next 2,257 years. So the 23-year old 33-inning minor league record may be very rare, and although it could be broken at any time, we should not expect to see it broken anytime soon.

There is a 50% chance we will see an "other" category game go 46 innings or more in the next 59,975 years. There is a 95% chance we will see an "other" category game go 46 innings or more in the next 259,207 years, or just two-thirds the age of mankind (about 300,000 years old). So the 21-year old 45-inning "other" category record seems to be extremely rare indeed, and although it could be broken at any time, it is very conceivable it may never be broken.

### **39. SUMMARY: MITO AND ENYA**

As long as there is a "hot stove league", baseball fans will argue whether somewhere back in the murky uncharted depths of undocumented baseball history there may perhaps be a game that lasted longer than the 45-inning game in

Mito, Japan, which is the longest baseball game by innings ever played, excluding Massachusetts Rules and planned marathon games.

Could I have spent 41 years searching for the longest game by innings, and missed one lasting more than 45 innings? I think the answer is yes. It took me 40 years and 11 months of searching before Jul 23, 2004, which is when, thanks to Mr. Masaru "Massy" Ikei of Yokohama, Japan, I found the 45-inning game in Mito. So who is to say a game longer than 45 innings may not be found in some dusty archive next month?

Some day in the future, a major league game will probably break the 26-inning barrier set over eight decades ago on May 1, 1920 by the Dodgers and Braves at Braves Field in Boston. And some other day, perhaps in the far future, a minor league game may break the 33-inning record set over two decades ago on Apr 18 and Jun 23, 1981 by the Red Wings and Paw Sox in Pawtucket's McCoy Stadium.

But will a game ever break the 45-inning record set Sep 20, 1983 in Mito, Japan by Light Manufacturing and Tanaka Hospital? Just think about that: 45 innings! That's five full regular-length 9-inning games. Only time will tell. As Enya sings so well:

Who can say where the road goes,  
Where the day flows,  
Who can say when the roads meet,  
And who can say when the day sleeps,  
Only time,  
Who knows, only time,  
Who knows, only time.

#### **40. EPILOGUE: ED SUDOL'S 288,225 INNINGS AND 31 YEARS AT SHEA**

Of course, had Hank Webb's pickoff not been wild, or had Ron Hodges not dropped the ball, or had Ed Sudol ruled the sliding Bake McBride out at the plate, or even better, had the rules on simultaneous balks and wild pickoff throws not been changed recently and Bake McBride had been required to return to second in the top of the 25th at Shea on Sep 11, 1974, the Cards and Mets might still be playing! With nine hours of rest daily, five months off for winter, and three hours per nine innings, or 45 innings daily and 9450 innings annually, they would now be in the 31st year and roughly the 288,225 th inning of that game. And every seven innings, the fans would still be stretching and singing,

Take me out to the ball game,  
Take me out with the crowd,  
Buy me some peanuts and Cracker Jack,  
I don't care if I EVER get back.

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