

Society for American Baseball Research



MINOR LEAGUE COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

April/June 1997 Vol 4.1

Committee Chairman:

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I. Committee News:

1. This is the first newsletter to be circulated since I have become chairman. The committee is an ongoing process, and I'm eager to see it progress to meet the needs of members. Suggestions for how to make the newsletter reflect the research, contact, and informational needs of members are hereby solicited. For the next year, I think we should plan to publish the newsletter quarterly. This period should establish it as an information base for interested members. At that point, the amount of exchange and content can determine frequency. To get things going, a few suggestions:

a. Whenever possible, contact me through e-mail at the above address. Replies will be faster, cheaper and easier than any other method. However, phone, fax and the US postal service are also acceptable and will be answered promptly. I don't have a scanner, so e-mailing articles by attaching a file isn't possible at present. I can, theoretically, receive them as files but have had problems when files are sent from outside the aol system.

ii. The newsletter will initially contain a listing of new members and their interests, general news, research requests, research resources, a report on committee projects, and a listing of minor league articles available for distribution. I will also compile an ongoing, annotated list of book-length publications about the minor leagues for each newsletter. I envision this as notification, rather than a serious review of the publications, though we can re-consider this in the future.

c. To make the newsletter useful, material must be furnished by members. Please contribute. The newsletter will only be as useful as our desire to share minor league information with each other. Please send bibliographical data and a short blurb describing the contents of new minor league books when you write them, or become aware of one.

2. The chairman is willing to serve as a central holder and distributor of articles and some ephemera on minor league baseball. A list of available materials will be published in the newsletter. When requesting a reprint, please send postage (usually 55 cents) and costs for reproducing (usually 10 cents per page). Costs will be listed alongside the articles. This service must be self-supporting, and donations are accepted with appreciation.

3. The committee thanks John Pardon for his efforts in coordinating and keeping alive the minor league committee in the past year. John, a former Chairman of the Minor League Committee from 1982-1987, has agreed to continue serving as telephone contact for research questions on minor league baseball. His address and telephone numbers are in the SABR directory.

4. GOODBYE PACIFIC COAST LEAGUE!

The Pacific Coast League, with its long history and sometime 200 game seasons, will disappear after the current season. On July 7th, the AP reports, triple A owners convened in Des Moines, Iowa, and approved a restructuring at the minors' highest rung. Only the International League will retain its current name.

The moves were precipitated by changes in the new PBA. Owners see the demise of the American Association and collapse of the current three AAA league format into two as a cost saving measure. Splitting into divisions, with most games being played among geographic rivals, will change almost all travel to bus rather than plane.

The new IL will consist of its current 10 members, plus Buffalo, Indianapolis, Louisville, and the expansion team in Durham, NC. The other, as yet unnamed AAA league, will include the ten PCL teams and Iowa, Nashville, New Orleans, Oklahoma City and Omaha, from the AA, and the expansion team in Memphis.

One positive to come from the restructuring is the possibility of the Little World Series resuming, though this has not been decided and would require the approval of Major League Baseball.

Hopefully, the new league will contain a Pacific Coast Division, so that a colorful part of baseball history continues in some form.

5. JIMMIE FOXX STATUE TO BE UNVEILED IN SUDLERSVILLE MD

On October 25, the home town of Jimmie Foxx will unveil a life-size bronze statue to its former baseball hero. Ted Williams is honorary chairman for the committee organizing the event. The day-long event has a number of attractions, and plans are still being finalized. The fall newsletter will report more specifics.

Foxx played minor league baseball in the Eastern Shore League, and made a memorable return to the Delmarva Peninsula in 1936. Two city teams in Cambridge Maryland, Phillips Delicious, a crab-packing company, and Coca-Cola, held a playoff in October. Foxx came down from Sudlersville and hit a 400 foot home run.

Related to the statue dedication, the Talbot County Historical Society has an exhibit on the Eastern Shore Baseball League and Jimmie Foxx from May 20 to October 29, 1997.

Any XX fans who would like to contribute to the Foxx Statue Committee may send it to P.O. Box 130, Sudlersville, Md. 21665. For information call Loretta C. Walls at (410) 928-3406.

6. NAME THAT NEWSLETTER!

At the SABR meeting in Louisville, I advanced the idea of naming the newsletter. At worst, it couldn't hurt, just be a little corny. So, a NAME THAT NEWSLETTER CONTEST is now underway. Entries will be accepted until the second issue is prepared. Enter by writing or e-mailing. First prize is an autographed copy of The Diamonds of Dixie.

Nominations received so far are:

The Bushwhacker	Mining the Minors
Beating the Bushes	The Minor League Newsletter

Send an entry, so we can fill the blank space at the top of the first page. We' ll be voting soon.

II. New Committee Members:

NAME

Mark Dobson
210 Sugartree Lane
S. Burlington VT 05403

INTERESTS

Penn League,
Computer related issues, i.e.
archives

NAME

Jonathan Dunkle
19A6 Capano Drive
Newark, DE 19702-1854

INTERESTS

Tobacco States League

Dale H. Gerber
2732 Shenck Rd
Manheim, PA 17545

Eastern League
York White Roses, Lancaster
Red Roses

Gary Jarvis
221 E. Fairchild St
Iowa City, IA 52245

Baseball in
Eastern Iowa, New Brunswick
Hubs

John McReynolds
409 S. ' ASt
Lompoc, CA 93436

California
minors

John W. Outland
9306 Woodcrest Rd.
Richmond VA 23229

Pacific Coast
League, esp. 19205

Alan Rice
337 Terry Dr
Billings, MT 59101

Pioneer League; ballparks

Jim Sandoval
144 Smith Vasser Rd
Harvest AL 35749

Alabama minors
especially Huntsville

George Slaughter
2010 Regency Ct. #8
Appleton, WI 54915-4914

Texas and Midwest
Leagues histories and
ballparks

Eduardo Valero
670 Ponce de Leon Apt 516

Puerto Ricans who have played
in the minors

III. Research Requests:

1. Tobacco States League. Jonathan Dunkle. Would like to know if anyone has done or is doing research on the league. 19a6 Capano Drive, Newark DE, 19702-1854.

2. Robin Lish is trying to locate information on her father' s minor league career. Wallace Edward ("Wally Pip") Schmidt probably played in the upper mid-west in the 1920s. He was a catcher. Anyone with information on this player in league databases please contact Robin at jlsh@pop.sn.net, or send the information to the Committee Chairman for forwarding. Thanks.

3. Dave Stevens is completing a biography of John Montgomery Ward, an attorney and baseball player in the 19th century. Anyone who has knowledge of Ward' s activities as player or organizer please contact Dave at 5225 N. River' s Edge, 410, Chicago, IL 60630, (312) 997-2092, Fax (312) 944-7650.

4. Ongoing research needs: Two publications that contain essential data for minor league researchers are The Encyclopedia of Minor League Baseball (2nd ed.) and The Minor League Register. For future volumes, additions and corrections should be sent to editor and committee member Lloyd Johnson. His address is in the SABR Directory. Also, The Historical Register, containing career records of minor leaguers who later had notable careers in the major, is underway. The players were originally listed in Daguerreotypes, and while encyclopedias cover their careers in the majors, compilation work is needed for many minor league careers. Anyone interested should contact Carlgs Bauer or Bob Hoie.

Thanks to Bob McConnell for contributing this list of ongoing research needs.

IV. Research Resources:

1. Bob McConnell is working on a list of minor leagues for which final averages have never been published. This valuable information will be disseminated as soon as possible, and can be updated and re-published on a regular basis.

2. Carlos Bauer is readying a second volume of The Minor League Baseball Research Journal for the printer. Information about contents and ordering will be available in the next newsletter.

V. Minor League Articles Available for Order:

1. Bass, Evan, "A Magical Mystery Eastern League Tour," Montgomery Journal, July 29, 1997. Lengthy review of a book (see new publications) by Steve Holcomb containing anecdotes and information about the current Double A Eastern League. (\$.50)

2. Green, Ernest J., "Grey Played Ball Before Writing," Baseball America, Mar. 3-16, 1997. Zane Grey' s minor league career. (\$.50)

3. Lingo, Will, "New PEA Includes Something for Everyone," Baseball America, July 7-20, 1997. A short, clear explanation detailing changes and provisions of the new Professional Baseball Agreement, governing ties between Professional and Major League Baseball organizations. (\$.50)

4. Zimmerman, Karl, "Diamonds in the Rough," Fort Lauderdale Sun Sentinel, June 8, 1997. Article detailing travel to 60 minor league parks in 25 states. (\$1.00)

VI. Publications:

1. Davis, Hank, Small-Town Heroes: Images of Minor League Baseball. Iowa City, Iowa, U. of Iowa Press, 1997. In 1993 Davis visited 28 towns attending minor league baseball games. Order through bookstores or U. of Iowa Press, (800) 235-2665.

2. Hall, John G., The KOM League Remembered. A newsletter devoted to the Kansas-Oklahoma-Missouri League of 1946-52. The author, a former batboy in the league, publishes and writes the lengthy, delightful, document. Order from him at 1709 Rainwood P1., Columbia, MO 65203, (573) 445-8125, or email: jhall03@mail.coin.missouri.edu

3. Holcomb, Steve, It' s Raining Rock Cats and Sea Dogs A guide to the ballparks, towns and history of the Eastern League. Order from the author. (301) 805-1757.

4. Ruggles, William B., The History of the Texas League of Professional Baseball Clubs. Published By the Texas League, 1951. A statistical compilation of 408 pages, softcover. Bob McConnell writes, "One of the most valuable sections of the book for researchers is the list of every player who appeared in a box score. The list gives the teams played for each year. Outstanding and unusual performances are noted for many players. This book is a must-for anyone doing research on the Texas League, particularly on individual players and managers."

Quote of the Quarter:

"Loyalty to any one sports team is pretty hard to justify. Because the players are always changing.. .You' re actually rooting for the clothes when you get right down to it. . . You are standing and cheering and yelling for your clothes to beat the clothes from another city."

--Jerry Seinfeld

Yeah, right, Jerry