

Society for American Baseball Research



MINOR LEAGUE COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

July/Sept 1997 Vol 4.2

Committee Chairman:

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I. Committee News:

1. MINOR LEAGUE DISPLAY IN ORIOLES MUSEUM

The historic train station at Camden Yards in Baltimore will house a baseball museum beginning in 1998. A minor league display is planned to celebrate area teams, present and past, in Maryland, Northern Virginia, Delaware, Southern Pennsylvania and West Virginia. The coordinator, Rebecca Kraus, needs donations or loans of old programs, souvenirs from 10 or more years ago, ticket stubs, old uniforms, or other paraphernalia illustrating area minor league teams. Contact Rebecca at (301) 496-2213 if you have items for loan, or Greg Schwalburg at the Babe Ruth Museum, (410) 727-1539, ext 3011.

2. OHIO BASEBALL HALL OF FAME NOW HOMELESS

The site next to Ned Skeldon Stadium, home of the Toledo Mud Hens, no longer serves as the home for the Ohio Baseball Hall of Fame. Unfortunately, the county was no longer able to subsidize the building, and the OBHOF, while still in existence, no longer has a permanent home. The site is now home for the Hard Ball Grille, a sports bar... . Of particular note is the "Toledo Professional History Wall Book and Historical Toledo Baseball Plaque Project." The Project, a work carried out by the Roger Breshahan/Mud Hens Chapter of Toledo, Ohio, consists of a timeline history of Toledo baseball along one side of the room. Included are historic photographs and assorted baseball paraphernalia. If one is in the area, the Grille certainly warrants a visit. Inquiries may be made to: Kathy Gardner, c/o Lucas County Recreation Center, 2901 Key Street, Toledo, Ohio 43537. The SABR chapter is also selling copies of a book to complement the wall. (Contributed by Rich Adler)

3. JIMMY FOXX STATUE DEDICATION CEREMONY

A ceremony to unveil a statue of Jimmie Foxx will commence at 11 am on Saturday, October 25th, at the intersection of Routes 300 and 313 in Sudlersville, MD. Luncheon will follow at the Sudlersville Middle School Auditorium. Advance tickets are necessary for the luncheon! A donation of \$20.00 (or \$15.00 for those under 12) will reserve lunch, but RSVP's are due by October 4th to the Sudlersville Community Betterment Club, Inc., PO Box 130, Sudlersville, MD 21668. Anyone who hasn't reserved by the time they read this and is attending should call the number below immediately. More details were provided in the previous newsletter (vol. 4.1). The contact person for the ceremony is Loretta C. Wails at (410) 928-3406.

4. K-O-M BIRTHDAY PARTY IN JUNE 1998

John Hall announces a reunion and celebration of the Kansas-Oklahoma-Missouri League for former players and others interested on June 15-18, 1998, in Carthage, Missouri. Between 150 to 200 former players are expected, including Bob Speake, Gale Wade and Jake Thies. The festivities will include an old-timers game and a golf tournament. A set registration fee includes all events plus three major banquets with professional entertainment, a picnic in the park after the old timers game, and a large buffet on the last day. You can contact John, who publishes the KOM Newsletter, at jhall03@mail.coin.missouri.edu or through his address in the SABR directory. Future newsletters will contain updates of the plans for the reunion. This sounds like a serious baseball party.

5. CHICKS NAME CHECKS OUT

Dave Pietrusza sent along the following AP story:

"The Redbirds, now an affiliate of the St. Louis Cardinals, will use ' Nostalgia Man' as its logo. The left-handed hitter in a baggy uniform was a temporary logo for Memphis Class AAA baseball but achieved unexpected popularity on t-shirts and golf shirts.

Trace Hallowell, creative director for Thompson and Company and the head of the Redbirds' project, said Wednesday that the logo is a departure from the cartoonish-looking animals that are currently popular in the minor leagues.

That nickname change means the name ' Chicks' dies. The team in Memphis used Chicks--short for Chickasaws--for 66 years. The Class PA franchise that used to be the Memphis chicks has now moved to Jackson, Tenn. David Hersh, owner of the class A.A franchise, had given the Class AAA franchise rights to the Chicks name."

To complete the story, the name Redbirds was available because the former Louisville Redbirds switched affiliation to the Milwaukee Brewers. Another AAA affiliation announcement for 1998 involved the Tuscan Toros and the Phoenix Diamondbacks. As of October 1st the Pirates and White Sox were seeking AAA affiliates, and Calgary and Nashville were available.

6. NAME THAT NEWSLETTER CONTEST!

Twelve imaginative, thoughtful and altogether appropriate names have been nominated for the minor league newsletter. The next issue will carry the name of the membership' s choice. A ballot is enclosed. Nominees' names have been omitted from the list, lest the vast prestige of some of our members influence the vote. Members may vote for the name they nominated, naturally, but please don' t stuff the ballot box. I don' t want to have to get Jimmy Carter in to oversee the election. The winner will receive an autographed copy of The Diamonds of Dixie, and perpetual recognition with each issue of future newsletters.

7. COMMITTEE PROJECTS

Our first goal, to establish the committee as a focal point for communication and coordination, is firmly established. Counting e-mail, telephone and letters, about 20 exchanges per week are going through the committee chairman. The next objective is to establish committee projects and lay the necessary groundwork to get them underway.

My impression in talking with members is that good research has been and is being accomplished, but often is not being published/distributed/or publicized. While doing basic research may provide personal satisfaction, dissemination is an important last step, for SABR members are consumers of baseball investigation as well as producers. Circulating articles by listing them in section 5 of the newsletter helps, but this is only a partial answer.

Two possible initial projects have emerged from informal discussions with members, and I wanted to use the newsletter ballot to also see how much interest and potential participation would be forthcoming for each.

First, the committee of almost 200 members contains skills in statistical analysis, writing, editing, and a vast amount of historical knowledge. SABR (and other journals) offer publishing opportunities for competent research. Establishing a system of peer review for manuscripts containing minor league research, essentially completed, might serve to motivate researchers, improve the quality of articles submitted for publication, and take some work off SABR publication editors. Most of us utilize peers informally for feedback on our research anyway, but many members may not have the contacts

necessary to get support on their writing' s content, organization, style, and scope. One set of questions on the attached questionnaire is to ascertain how much participation and interest would be forthcoming if such a system is set up by the committee.

Second, several members have lobbied for detailed book reviews on minor league books. In the past five years more books on the minor leagues have been published than in all years previous. I continue to believe that the newsletter functions best as a timely (somewhat) standard of news and member coordination. A separate annual or two-year publication consisting of reviews of books wholly or substantially about the minors is feasible if supported by members in three ways: (1) authors or their publishers would have to furnish books for review; (2) members would have to contribute timely reviews following a set of guidelines for length and style with objective and responsible evaluations; and (3) the publication would have to be self-sustaining, which means that enough members would have to buy copies at cost to make the project break even.

Please indicate on the attached ballot any interest in the above projects. Feel free to suggest other projects you believe the committee should undertake soon or in the future. Thank you.

8. HALL OF FAME LIBRARY WMTS MINOR LEAGUE PUBLICATIONS

The National Baseball Hall of Fame Library sent the following communication to minor league teams regarding publications. Committee members who can add to the library' s collection should contact Corey Seeman at the address below. He hopes to have a list of publications or a searchable database of minor league publications on the library' s website within six months. Extensive collections are now available from the Three-I, Texas and International Leagues. Committee members can profit directly from the library' s collection and cataloguing efforts, so we should make every effort to support it:

"The National Baseball Hall of Fame Library is undergoing a major initiative to collect material documenting minor league baseball history. From this year on, we are attempting to collect publications from all minor league teams for permanent inclusion in the library. The minors are a critically important component of [baseball] history and we are hoping that our collection will be as complete as possible.

We are looking for any publications (Programs, Yearbooks, Media Guides) from 1997 and earlier years. We are also looking for other printed material including team newsletters, ticket sales guides, merchandise catalogs, team photographs, et. We would also be interested in feature newspaper articles, scrapbooks, organization records (especially if your team is moving or looking to clear up space.) Please send the publications to:

Corey Seeman, Technical Services Department
National Baseball Hall of Fame Library
P.O. Box 590
Cooperstown, NY 13326"

Corey can also be contacted by e-mail; seeman@telenet.net

9. "PEANUTS" JOHNSON TO SPEAK AT SABR REGIONAL

Mamie "Peanuts" Johnson, one of three women who played in the Negro Leagues, will be the luncheon speaker at the Bob Davids Chapter Regional on November 8, 1997, in Laurel, Md. The Saturday meeting will also feature Jimmy Williams on giving/reading signs, panels with official scorers and scouts, and more. For information or reservation form, call Bob Savitt at (301) 983-8705 or e-mail: bobsavitt@aol.com

II. New Committee Members:

NAME

INTERESTS

Jonathan Dunkle
(Corrected address)
2106 Sheldon Dr
Newark DE 19711
dunkle@ludwig.math.udel.edu

Tobacco States League

Ball, Jim
1706 Palomino Dr
Rowlett, TX 75088

Texas League, minors in
Texas, textile leagues in
South Carolina

Kevin D. McCann
283 Nurrell Rd
Dickson, TN 37055

Ky - IL - Tn League, minor
ig baseball in Jackson, TN

III. Research Requests:

1. Rich Adler wants information on surviving "graduates" of the North Atlantic League (1946-1950). He can be reached at 160 Valley Drive, Ypsilanti, MI 48197, or by e-mail: RADLER@sb-f1.umd.umich.edu.

2. Charles Lehourites is looking for information on the New England League, especially from the war years to 1949 or 1950 when it went out of existence. Contact him at 35 Potter Street, Pawtucket RI 02860.

3. Jim Price needs to fill in material on William H. Lucas with his career and life before 1900. Also, any prints of Lucas from baseball guides would be appreciated. e-mail JimPrice95 or contact him through his mailing address in the SABR directory.

4. Chris Smith, Media Relations Director for the Asheville Tourists, is working on two team projects. One is a listing of all Asheville players who have made it to the big leagues. He presently has a list of 476 former players but thinks there are more. Also, he is trying to compile an all-time roster of Asheville players. For a franchise stretching back 100 years, this is a daunting task. Any help or suggestions for possible databases would be appreciated. Contact Chris at Asheville Tourists Baseball Club, P.O. Box 1556, Asheville, NC 28802, or e-mail: touristsbb@mindspring.com, or (704) 258-0428; fax (704)258-0320.

5. Lyle Spatz asks if George Mogridge pitched for St. Paul (the Saints were in the AA American Association that year) in 1926. Can someone with the appropriate guides send Lyle an answer at LMspatz@prodigy.net or at the address in the SABR directory.

6. Jo Ann Raiser is trying to uncover the baseball career of her grandfather, Frank Scott Hill. He was born June 18, 1876, in Newark, NJ, and attended Notre Dame. Family oral history says that he played professional baseball in a "West Coast League." PCL? Could someone with the appropriate guides see if the name appears, probably after 1896, and contact Jo Ann at 2045 Compton Ct, Pancho Cordova, CA 95670. She would appreciate the effort and could fill in some family history.

IV. Research Resources:

1. Pat Doyle, of the organization Old-Time Data, has assisted SABR members in the past few years in obtaining information on players of the past for a modest fee. For those interested in owning their own reference source he offers:

"The Professional Baseball Player Database is a Windows-based compilation of major and minor league players from 1940 to 1959, including many, but not all, of the 'less than's.' It contains season-by-season batting information (BA, HR, RBI) for position players and W-L, ERA for pitchers. Players can be listed by team, league, or season, and both team and league listings can be arranged according to the desired statistical field. Cost to SABR members is \$50 + \$4 S&H. Further information can be obtained via e-mail (pjdoyl@aol.com) or phone at 913-345-9894." Pat's mailing address is listed in the SABR directory.

V. Minor League Articles Available for Order:

Short articles which are of general interest to committee members should be mailed to the chairman for inclusion in this section. Copies will be reproduced and disseminated at cost, which is indicated after the article. Please make checks payable to Ernest J. Green, and not to SABR. If you have written an article (published or unpublished, except those already in SABR volumes) on the minors, or compiled data and are willing to have it circulated, please send it in.

5. Gildea, William, "No Longer a League of Their Own," Washington Post, Sept. 3, 1997. An elegy for the defunct American Association, with a personality sketch of its former president, Branch Rickey III. (Branch says that when he introduces himself people sometimes ask, 'Aren't you dead?' as a bonus, a wonderful picture (zerox) of Ted Williams as a Minneapolis Miller in 1938. 2 p. \$.50.

6. Hendrickson, Paul, "At Play in a Fading Light," Washington Post, August 25, 1997. A portrait of Municipal Stadium, home of the South Atlantic League Hagerstown Suns. While the article centers on the struggling Class A franchise (it will be in existence at least one more year), the writer draws a vivid portrait of lower minor league baseball life today. 5 p. \$1.00.

7. Holl, Jim. "Day-by-day Game Results of 1885 Interstate League." Includes final standings for the teams from Springfield, Erie, Youngstown, Lexington, Frankfort and Dayton, in Pa, Oh, and KY, and a letter from the author explaining how the statistics were compiled. 3 p. \$.75.

8. Moore, Scott, "Wild Pitch," Washington Post, September 7, 1997. What? You never heard of Eddie Klepp, the man who broke baseball's color barrier before Jackie Robinson? Eddie did it in reverse as a white pitcher (of sorts) for the Negro League Cleveland Buckeyes. According to the hip-written but well-researched article, Eddie was the direct antithesis of Jackie's heroism. The Buckeyes knew good talent when they saw it. Eddie didn't have it. 5 p. \$1.00.

9. Selter, Ronald M., "Compilation of the Top 25 Batters for Minor League Slugging Percentage." The compilation, which the author believes may be incomplete and can be supplemented by others interested, is based upon a minimum 3,000 at bats. The list is topped by Joe Bauman's incredible lifetime .702 slugging average. 2 p. \$.50.

VI. Publications:

1. McNeil, William F., The King of Swat: An Analysis of Baseball's Home Run Hitters from the Major, Minor, Negro and Japanese Leagues. Jefferson, NC: McFarland Press, 1997. Compares the top hitters in each league (including Babe Ruth, Henry Aaron, Sadaharu Oh, Josh Gibson, and Joe Bauman) to "answer" the question, Who is the greatest home run hitter in the game's history. Order from McFarland, 1-800-253-2187, \$28.50 hardcover.

2. Minor League Baseball Research Journal, Vol. 2. Edited by Carlos Bauer and Bob Hoie. Published by SABR. 180 pages, paperback, comb-bound. \$12.50. Volume 1 has been reprinted and is available for \$11.45. Order from SABR. An order blank can be found in the August 1997 SABR Newsletter.

3. Okkonen, Marc, Minor League Baseball Towns of Michigan. Holt, Michigan: Thunder Bay Press, 1997. "186 pages of team histories, rare photos, and location maps for all the communities in Michigan that have participated in professional baseball leagues since the 1880s." Paperback. Order from Partners Book Distributing, (800) 336-3137. \$16.95.

4. Schmidt, Ray, Two-Eyed League. A history of the Illinois-Iowa League of 1890-1892, the predecessor of the Three-I League. 256 pages, soft-covered, with pictures and charts of team and player data. Available to committee members at a discounted postpaid price of \$10.00. Order by check or money order from the author, 13848 W. Rockbluff Way, Lockport, IL 60441.

Quote of the Quarter:

"They wanted me to come here and talk baseball and I said sure. So we' ve lost seven in a row since and I' m 0 for my last 20. Baseball has a way of checking you for leaks."

Louisville Redbirds outfielder Kevin Eoslofski, at the 1997 SABR Meeting...

Please return ballots to the chair-man, Ernest J. Green, at

Mail: 10913 Whiterim Drive e mail: erniegr@aol.com
Potomac, MD 20854 fax: 1-301-983-8198

NAME THAT NEWSLETTER

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|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Minor League Echoes | <input type="checkbox"/> Minors Only? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Minor Minutes | <input type="checkbox"/> Mining the Minors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Minor Notes | <input type="checkbox"/> Class-E Comments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Minor Thoughts | <input type="checkbox"/> The Bushwhacker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spotlight on the Minors | <input type="checkbox"/> Beating the Bushes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Minor Matters | <input type="checkbox"/> The Minor League
Newsletter |

Please vote for only one; don' t confuse me.

PEER REVIEW

1. Are you willing to review articles or manuscripts that colleagues are preparing for publication? Yes No

2. If yes, what length? _____
3. Do you presently have a manuscript or will you have completed within the next 6 months which you would like to submit for review? Yes No
4. Do you think a peer review subcommittee would encourage of articles on minor league baseball? Yes No

BOOK REVIEW PUBLICATION

1. Would you be willing to review books on minor league baseball for a limited run publication? Yes No
2. Have you written a book still in print on minor league baseball in the past 5 years that you would like to have reviewed in such a publication? Yes No
3. Do you think the best format for such a publication would be: Desk top published Perfect bound Other
4. Would you buy such a publication annually? Yes No

How much would you be willing to pay? _____