

GEORGE MICHAEL

Mystery Photos

Since 1947 I have been researching and collecting baseball photographs, writing captions and reassembling the facts that surround them. My specialty is action photos of players sliding. Over the years I have learned that when all research tools have been exhausted, it is time for fresh eyes to view the photo; there are none better than those of SABR members. Here are two tough new cases, and the status of the cases I presented last year ("Nine Mystery Photos" in *Baseball Research Journal* #34). I am happy to say that seven of those mysteries have been solved and thanks to the hundreds of members who helped unravel them.

1. The Braves Mystery

Who is this Braves runner? The Braves uniform is 1934 or 1935. The third baseman's stockings tell us it is the 1934 Dodgers. So we know it is the Dodgers versus the Braves in 1934, at Braves Field. With very few clues available, the runner needs to be identified before the mystery can be completely solved.



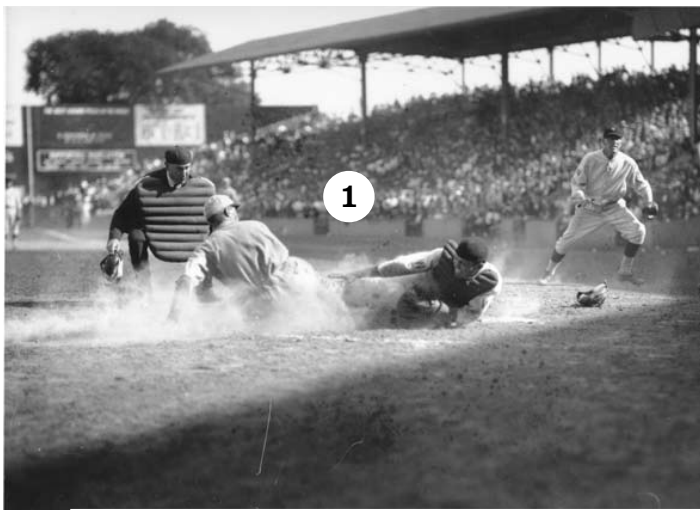
2. The Honus Mystery

This is a famous photo, but there are few clues to identify it. The runner is the Pirates Honus Wagner. His socks tell us it is either 1912, 1913, or 1914. Don Duran, author of the book *Boiling Out at the Springs*, identifies the ballpark as Whittington Park in Hot Springs, AK. But the identity of the catcher and the umpire remains a mystery.



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Solutions to Previous Mysteries

1. **THE SENATORS MYSTERY** —Many thought the Senators pitcher was Joe Martina. In fact, the Washington pitcher is Allan Russell. SABR member Edward Marly sent photos that helped solve this one.

July 19, 1924: The Browns' Wally Gerber scored on Jack Tobin's base hit in the 10th inning. The Senators catcher is Bennie Tate, and the umpire is Dick Nallin. The Browns won, 10-9. The game lasted four hours and 45 minutes. **CASE CLOSED.**



2. **THE DODGERS MYSTERY**—Ray Bilbrough of Saline, MI, identified the catcher as being Butch Henline of the Phillies. The runner, according to a photo in the *New York Daily News* on May 2, 1922, is Jimmy Johnston, who was tagged out in the first inning of the May 1 game won by the Dodgers, 2-0. **CASE CLOSED.**

3. **THE HOOPER MYSTERY**—Despite many letters, the identity of the third baseman and the year remain a mystery. **UNSOLVED.**

4. **THE JACKIE ROBINSON MYSTERY**—Bob Clobes of Chesterfield, MO, identified the Phillies runner as Granny Hamner. Dave Smith of Retrosheet determined that the play occurred on April 23, 1948, as the Phillies beat the Dodgers, 10-2. **CASE CLOSED.**



5. **THE CUBS MYSTERY**—I received a ton of mail on this photo, but no one could absolutely identify the Cubs player. The most popular guesses were Lou Stringer, Emil Verban, Bobby Sturgeon, Johnny Ostrowski, and Gene Mauch. If you are a serious Cubs fan, can you help with this one? **UNSOLVED.**



6. THE GIANTS MYSTERY—Richard Westin of San Anselmo, CA, solved this mystery with a photo of the same play taken from a different angle. The photo shows that on June 7, 1939, the Giants' Jo Jo Moore was forced out at second when the Cubs' Dick Bartell stepped on the bag. The Cubs won, 7-1. CASE CLOSED.

7. THE DiMAGGIO MYSTERY—Dave Jordan of Jenkintown, PA, gets the key assist on this mystery. He pointed out that the A's third baseman is *not* Hank Majeski but Mickey Rutner. Rutner played third base for just 11 games in 1947. One of those games took place on September 28, when Hal Weafer was the umpire at third. DiMaggio advanced to third base on George McQuinn's single in the sixth inning of New York's 5-3 win. It was the season's last day, and the last major league game for Weafer and Rutner. CASE CLOSED.

8. THE CARDINALS MYSTERY—It did not take long for a lot of Cardinal fans to identify the Cards' runner as Frankie Frisch. Researching a number of Boston newspapers revealed that the play took place in the first inning of the opener of a doubleheader in Boston on August 26, 1931. Frisch slid under the tag of catcher Al Spohrer as umpire Dolly Stark looked on. St. Louis won, 6-1. CASE CLOSED.

9. THE RED SOX MYSTERY—Many people swore that the Red Sox runner was Joe Vosmik. In all the mail I received, Charles Marsh of Allentown, PA, included a photo from a book showing this play taken from a different angle. It identified pitcher Monte Pearson tagging Lou Finney out at home. The umpire was George Moriarty. The play took place in the first inning of an April 26, 1940, game at Fenway Park when the Sox beat the Yankees, 8-1. CASE CLOSED.

