



Pacific Coast League

POTPPOURRI

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PACIFIC COAST LEAGUE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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The Banning of Tobacco in the Pacific Coast League

By Mark Macrae

Happy New Year !! Don't get too smoked up, but 2018 marks the 25th year that all forms of tobacco use have been banned in minor league baseball. The rule prohibits players, coaches and umpires from using tobacco in the ballpark or on the team buses.

The health risks associated with tobacco use have been well documented for decades, and most people reading this article will remember a time when tobacco use was a significant part of the American culture. But did you know that at one time, baseball and tobacco were very close allies. Tobacco advertising regularly lined the outfield walls of ballparks, and it was rare to pick up a scorecard without at least one tobacco related advertisement.

During the first week of the Pacific Coast



El Telegrafo cigar ad which adorns the back cover of this 1903 San Francisco baseball program.



Obak cigarette pack which contained the PCL/Northwest League baseball cards.

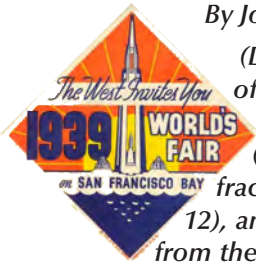
League's existence (beginning March 26, 1903) the program for the San Francisco club contained four such advertisements for tobacco including a full page advertisement for El Telegrafo Cigars on the back cover.

By the end of the PCL's first decade, beautiful color lithographed baseball cards of Pacific Coast League and Northwest League players were inserted into packs of Obak cigarettes and sold up and down the West Coast. In 1911, a second brand of cigarettes (Mono cigarettes) began inserting black and white photos of Pacific Coast League players, though most of those were distributed in California. Several hundred different cards were issued from 1909-1911. The following year, cigarette insert cards of PCL players ceased to exist. Although their distribution

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How a Baseball Dropped From a Blimp Became a Deadly Weapon

By Joye Ogradowski



(Disclaimer: There are several versions of this event on the internet and in books. The number of teeth Joe lost (four, five, or eight), the number of fractures he sustained to his jaw (11 or 12), and the number of baseballs dropped from the blimp (three, four, or five), vary from account to account.)

The Good Year blimp "Volunteer" hovered 800 feet above Treasure Island in San Francisco Bay, the site of the 1939 World's Fair/Golden Gate International Exposition. It was August 3, San Francisco Seals catcher Joseph Conrad Sprinz's 37th birthday.

In celebration of Baseball Day at the Fair, and the 100th anniversary of America's national pastime, the Seals arranged a promotional event and invited Joe to be the star participant. He later admitted, as per the Oakland Tribune, that he wasn't sure why he got the honor of being the ball-drop guy. "Maybe it was because that day was my birthday, or maybe it was because I was the only one crazy enough to try it."

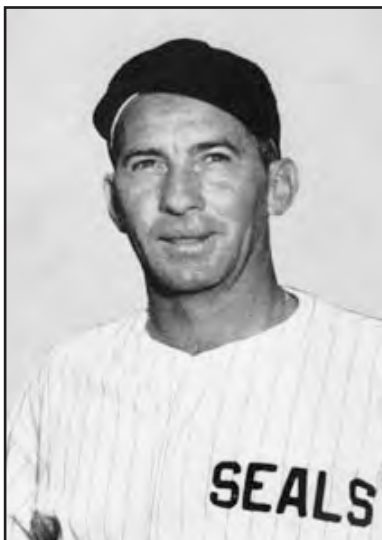
As Harry Borba of The San Francisco Examiner described the event the following day, "Rivalling the speed of light in its downward flight, a white baseball plummets earthward. Beneath it and gauging its meteoric fall as it flashes against the afternoon sun, is a sturdy young man wearing a baseball uniform, his left hand enclosed in a big mitt."

"Some 1,200 persons, mostly kids celebrating the baseball's anniversary with their idols, the San Francisco Seals, on Treasure Island, gazed in rapt admiration as the ball falls with the flash of a spent rocket, and Joe Sprinz, ace catcher of the local team, lifts his hands above his head to catch it." You could cut the tension with a knife.

Three baseballs were dropped from the blimp by World War 1 bombing ace Capt. A.T. Sewell. One of the speeding bullets was carried by a gust of wind and fell into the grandstands; one buried itself in the grass; the third...

"I was shading my eyes from the sun," Joe explained. "The ball came so fast, I didn't have a chance to turn the glove to catch it."

According to The San Francisco Chronicle, it was estimated that by the time the ball hit Joe's glove, it



Seals backstop Joe Sprinz "staggered a few steps as he grasped his mouth with both hands. He fell forward and writhed in agony as his teammates rushed toward him. When he fell, a muffled groan from the crowd (of about 1200) went up."

SF Examiner reporter Harry Borba

was traveling at approximately 228 feet per second, or 150 miles per hour. The force of the ball caused his glove to slam into his face, shattering his upper jaw and cracking it in (multiple places), crushing his nose, and knocking out several teeth.

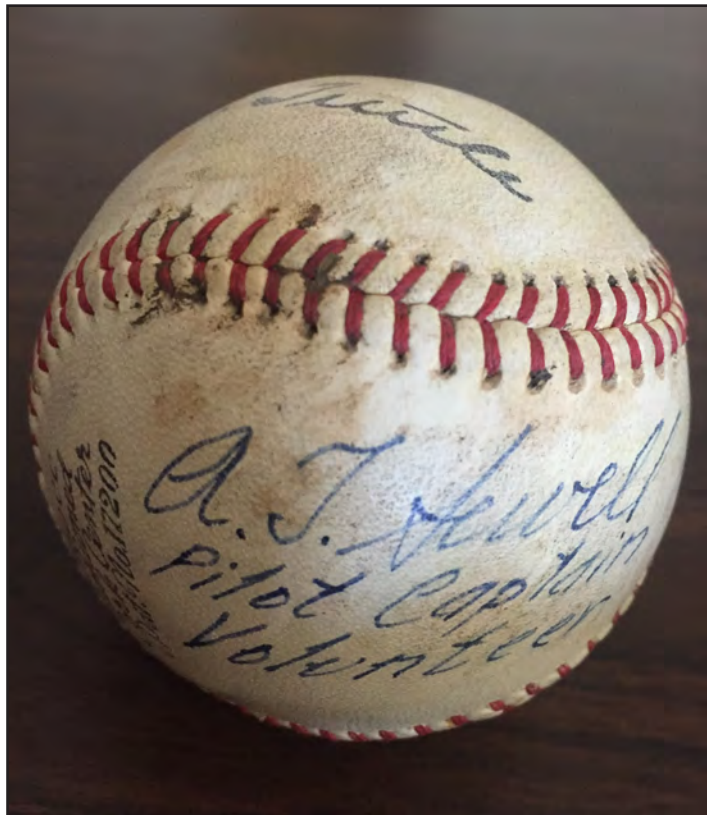
"My lips were like hamburgers," Joe said. "I was in the hospital (St. Joseph's in San Francisco) for three months. We were fighting for the pennant and only had one other catcher, Larry Woodall. "It was the worst thing that ever happened to me. I could have been killed."

As for further promotional events, Seals president Charles Graham declared, "No more stunts in which players take part." The Chronicle's Ed. R. Hughes wrote: "All the latest stunt cost

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How a Baseball Dropped From a Blimp... continued from page 2

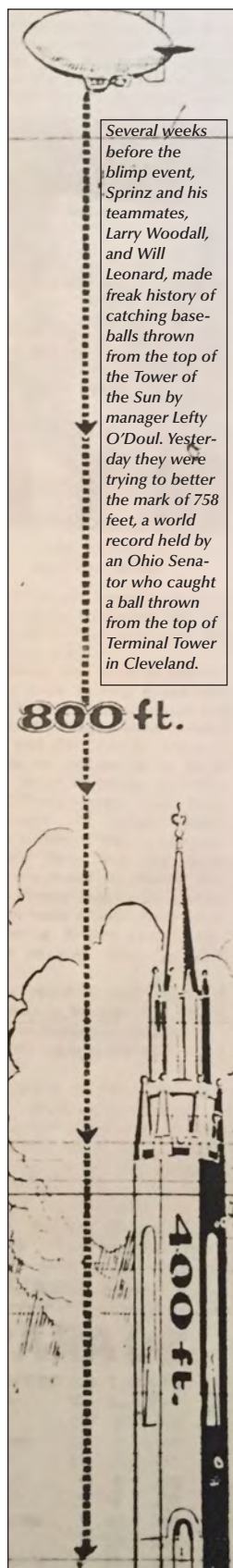
the Seals was the services of Joe Sprinz, the best catcher in the league. They say that Joe will live, so he cannot be seriously hurt, but the durable Dutchman is suffering plenty at St. Joseph's Hospital and the Seals' catching staff is well riddled. Supposing Sprinz had caught that ball tossed from a height of 800 feet? He would have gotten about one line in small type. He did not catch it, so he is in St. Joseph's Hospital pretty well bashed up."



The discoloration on this ball, signed by the captain of the blimp, "Volunteer," is due to the remnants of Joe's blood, well preserved after nearly 80 years.

For five years after the accident, Sprinz suffered with recurring headaches. This did not, however, drain him of his catching ability. Joe batted .312 for the 1939 season, with a .980 fielding percentage, and the Seals finished in second place, sporting a 97-78 record. They lost to the Seattle Rainiers in the first round of the playoffs.

Joe signed his first contract with the Enid Harvesters of the Southwestern League in 1924, at the tender age of 21. Following a cup of coffee with the Cleveland Indians and St. Louis Cardinals, Joe signed with the San Francisco Seals in 1938. There he remained through the 1946 season when the Seals won the Pacific Coast League pennant, and Joe batted a career-best .312.



January 28, 1977 (A Letter from Joe from the Collection of Ray Saraceni)

Dear Jim...

Thank you for the clipping. It was nice of you to mail it to me. Also that you were pleased with the auto-graphed picture.

With regards to that stunt I tried years ago, I'll give you a short run-down on what happened.

In 1939 at the SF Words Fair, which was on Treasure Island, Walter Mails, a former big league pitcher and the publicity man for the SF Seals Ball Club, had three of the catchers try and catch baseballs tossed from the Tower of the Sun on Treasure Island. O'Doul, our manager, dropped the balls, about 450 feet from the tower. Larry Woodall and Will Leonard caught a few and Joe caught five. So Mails got another idea to have a Good Year Blimp drop a ball from about 1200 feet. This was on August 3, 1939, my birthday - 37 years old. Anyway, several of the players and myself stood around until the blimp was over the ball field on Treasure Island. All walked off and I was it. Said to myself, God hates a coward, so I was going to try it. I had to look directly into the sun and shade my eyes from the sun.

The first two balls that the pilot dropped, one went into the stands, opposite side of the stands, where people were watching. The other ball I saw was out of my reach. The fourth ball I saw all the way, and it looked like the size of an aspirin tablet. It hit my lips, both lacerated very badly. I lost five teeth but was not knocked out. Was in the hospital for three months, and when I was released, saw the dentist and had my mouth wired up for another two months. Also had 11 pinstripe cracks on my upper jaw.

The Lord was good to me to give me the courage to play again, until 1946, when I, as they say, was too old. Was active for 23 years and caught over 2,300 ball games.

In good shape for 74 as I am grateful to God for giving me courage.

Enjoy some of the Seattle ball games this summer. Good luck.

Joe Sprinz

“Spirits of the West Wind” Dedicated at Lane Field Park *By Bill Swank*

In 1997, I attended the Port of San Diego’s first public meeting about the North Embarcadero Visionary Plan. Because this waterfront location included Lane Field, I was determined to preserve the history of the Padres’ first home on San Diego Bay. My main memory from that initial meeting was an elderly gentleman who wanted to honor San Diego’s aerospace industry. He proposed that an actual 76-foot high Atlas missile should stand at the corner of Broadway and Harbor Drive. The audience laughed and mocked him. My comments about baseball, on the other hand, were met with cold silence.

Over the years, my continued appearances at NEVP meetings elevated my status to pest, possibly even gadfly. Eventually, the purpose of my attendance was acknowledged and I became known as “the baseball guy.”

By 2011, when protestors descended on New York’s financial district to “Occupy Wall Street,” anarchists across America began to occupy public property with their own individual agendas. The timing was perfect to increase the intensity of my campaign, but being new to protest and civil disobedience, I wasn’t exactly sure how to conduct a one-man demonstration.

I have been Santa Claus in Balboa Park since 2002 and traditionally light the Community Christmas Tree in the park on Saturday after Thanksgiving. On a hot November morning in 2011, prior to the tree lighting that evening, I wore my wool Santa suit to Lane Field and held an “Occupy Lane Field” sign. My demand was for a statue of Ted Williams. The demonstration received extensive media coverage.

Embolden, I wore the red suit to the next San Diego Port Commissioners meeting and recited a brief poem inspired by Clement Moore with new words to suit the purpose.

“T’was the night before baseball, and all though the town, not a creature was stirring, when Santa took the mound. He told the board members, I have a goal. A statue of Ted Williams, or I’ll give you all coal!”

The result: Nothing.

However, that year, the California Coastal Commission ruled a 150-foot setback space with public access must be made available along the east side of Harbor Drive. The Port of San Diego approved construction of two high-rise hotels on the Lane Field site and a replica of a baseball diamond would be laid out on the setback park at Broadway and Harbor Drive. The port commissioners were listening.



Former Padres third baseman Rudy Regalado throws first pitch at dedication of Lane Field Park (2015)



Lisa Schirmer's "Spirits of the West Wind" billow at Lane Field Park (2017)

The SABR plaque dedicated to Lane Field in 2003 at Broadway and Pacific Highway was reset behind home plate in the replica park. The distance from home to first base was 87-feet just as it had been for almost 20 years at Lane Field. The park was dedicated on March 16, 2015. Former Padres third baseman Rudy Regalado threw the first pitch.

On November 29, 2017, the developers celebrated the topping of the second high-rise hotel at Lane Field and unfurled the colorful windglyphs of Lisa Schirmer titled, “Spirits of the West Wind.” In her remarks, Lisa explained how the wind came off San Diego Bay and carried home runs by Ted Williams, Max West, Jack Graham and Luke Easter over the right field wall that bounced on Pacific Highway.

Pitching, hitting and catching are depicted in the windglyphs. Ted Williams is featured on the hitting and fielding flags and Eddie ERAUTT is the pitcher. His grandson, Jessie Rickard, pulled the halyard to raise Grandpa’s windglyph.

The memories of the Pacific Coast League San Diego Padres remain alive at the corner of Broadway and Harbor Drive.



Baseball Santa “occupies Lane Field” and demands a statue of Ted Williams (2011)

Early Morning Blaze Destroys Edmonds Field *By Alan O'Connor*

In the early morning hours of Monday, July 11, 1948, the neighborhood around Edmonds Field, the Pacific Coast League (PCL) Sacramento Solons ball park on the corner of Riverside Boulevard and Broadway, was awakened to a tremendous blaze. Soon the surrounding streets were packed with tens of thousands concerned citizens who watched as the ball park burned to the ground. Witnesses said that the fire could be seen for miles.

Built in 1922 as Moreing Field, the old 10,000 seat wooden structure went fast. When dawn broke the fire was mostly out, but the ball park, except part of the left field covered bleachers, and three neighboring homes were totally destroyed. Gone were the grand stand, bleachers, locker rooms and team offices. Losses included most team records (going back decades), concession inventory, \$320 in petty cash, team equipment (including bats, balls and uniforms), and most players' individual items such as gloves, cleats and grooming items. Solons fans were devastated. Despite the chaos, many younger agile fans were able to dodge the firemen and police to go home with souvenirs such as partially burned jerseys and mini-bats.

Sacramento newspaper writer and long-time Solons fan, Stan Gilliam claimed jokingly in the 2006 Public Television production, *The Golden Game, Baseball in Sacramento*, that a cigarette he accidentally dropped in the wooden grandstand had caused the fire. While possible, his claim is unlikely since small cigarette fires were common and there were many other smokers at the game that night. Many conspiracy theorists, aware that the insurance on the ball park had been raised from \$140,000 to \$250,000 a couple of weeks before the fire, were convinced that the fire was arson.

After the fire, the Solons were forced to be a road team for the rest of the season. At the time of the Sunday doubleheader against the Seattle Rainiers the day before the fire, the Solons were in eighth place in the eight team PCL. Their fortunes did



not improve as the finished the season at the bottom of the standings.

A new concrete Edmonds Field (sometimes referred to as Edmonds Field II) was in place for the opening of the 1949 season, that season the team set club attendance records and finished in an improved third place.



The Greatest? *By Eric Nelson*



Top row L-R: Truck Hannah, Emmett Nelson, Fay Thomas, Whitey Campbell, Lou Garland, Walt Goebel, Art McDougall, Jim Oglesby, Marvin Gudat. Middle row: Frank Demaree, Carl Dittmar, Dick Ward, Gene Lillard, Dave Fleming, Jack Lelivelt, Oscar Reichow, Gilly Campbell, Mike Meola, Roy Henshaw, Jimmie Reese. Bottom Row: Frankie Jacobs, Mike Gazella, Ken Richardson, Bobby Mattick, Jigger Statz, Bob Lowe

Many baseball historians consider the 1934 Los Angeles Angels to be the greatest minor league team of all time. And they have a point. After winning the PCL pennant in 1933, Los Angeles entered the '34 campaign as the favorite, but the sale of 30 game winner Alva "Bobo" Newsom back to the majors gave hope to several contenders. Those hopes vanished almost immediately. The Angels ran up such a commanding early lead that PCL leaders called an emergency meeting in June to hurriedly approve a split season, hoping it would maintain fan interest. It didn't matter one bit.

The Angels won the ad-hoc second half as convincingly as they had the first, rolling up a full season record of 137-50. Deprived of a playoff that brought added revenue, PCL officials tried one last trick: they assembled a PCL All-Star team using a fan vote to play the Angels in a best-of-seven series at Wrigley Field. But nothing could slow the Angels juggernaut. They pounded the All-Stars almost as convincingly as they had the rest of the Pacific Coast League and won the series in six games.

Some say the 1937 Newark Bears, a Yankees farm team boasting future major leaguers Charlie Keller, Joe Gordon and Atley Donald, was the best. That team compiled a 109-43 mark, so both claims have their merits. We'll never settle that debate but the '34 Angels club was awesome. They had it all: hitting, power, speed, fielding, pitching, leadership and experience. No one else came close.

Angels Battle All-Stars

The Angels-All Stars series began at Wrigley Field on October 2nd, 1934. To ensure competitiveness, a 60-40 split of the gate proceeds was promised to the players. Ladies were admitted free, a Wrigley innovation, but there were no local radio broadcasts of the games. Instead, fans were encouraged to "come out early" and listen to the World Series between the Tigers and Cardinals, which was played over the loudspeakers before the game.

In the opener, the Angels beat the All-Stars 6-4 behind Lou

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The Greatest? By Eric Nelson Continued from Page 6

Garland, but they lost the next two as the All-Stars hit Fay Thomas hard to win 5-2 and then battered a series of Angel pitchers to win the third game, 9-7. In that one, starter Roy Henshaw exited in the third but Dick Ward pitched well enough to keep it close at 6-5. But Emmett Nelson surrendered three quick runs in an inning of work and the Angels were finished, trailing now in the series two games to one. The teams took Saturday off so as not to compete with college football, then the Angels' big bats awoke to even the series in a 13-7 slugfest. Fay Thomas returned to form in the fifth game, shutting out the All-Stars, 3-0 for a 3-2 Angel advantage.

A doubleheader finale, if it got that far, was scheduled to decide the crown. It didn't get that far. Ward started and surrendered two first inning runs as Oscar Eckhardt led off the game with a single and light-hitting Hollywood shortstop Jimmy Levey hit one over the right field screen for a 2-0 lead. The Angels countered in the top of the fourth when Walt Goebel lofted a bases-loaded fly ball to left and Marv Gudat's acrobatic slide at the plate just eluded the tag of catcher Larry Woodall. Babe Dahlgren got the run right back for the All-Stars, clouting a solo homer in the bottom of the inning and Seals pitcher Sam Gibson continued to stifle the Angels. Into the eighth it stayed 3-1 as news came in that St. Louis, behind Paul "Daffy" Dean, had beaten the Tigers 4-3 to even the World Series at three games apiece.

Los Angeles tied things up in the top of the eighth when Jim Oglesby's homer scored Gudat in front of him, and Emmett Nelson, who had relieved Ward in the seventh, held the All-Stars in check. Then in the ninth, Carl Dittmar, who'd hit only three homers all year, put the Angels in front 4-3 with a blast into the left field stands. It was his second of the series and all that remained was for Nelson to hold the lead. Louie Almada pinch-hit for Woodall and blooped a single just past Dittmar. Fred Haney sacrificed him to second but Johnny Bassler flew to Gudat in left. Manager Dutch Reuther sent himself up to pinch hit for Gibson. Nelson blew three strikes by him, and the Angels were champs.

EPILOGUE

Despite their Coast League dominance, these Angel players did not achieve great major league success. As an independent club, the Angels were a blend of players. Some on their way up, and those who'd had a shot at the big leagues and didn't stick. In the PCL, and especially in Los Angeles, those conditions helped produce well-balanced teams rather than a farm club designed primarily to develop individual talent. Among the regulars, only Carl Dittmar did not play in the major leagues but only Frank Demaree enjoyed any real success in the bigs. His .299 average over a ten years included a .350 mark in 1936 and starting outfield berths on the 1936-37 National League All Star teams. Jigger Statz was 37 years old in 1934 and though he batted .285 lifetime with the Cubs and Dodgers, he won lasting fame for his exploits in the Coast League. Jimmie Reese couldn't beat out Tony Lazzeri on the Yankee infield in 1929 but hung around the majors for a couple of years as a backup before returning to the PCL. Catcher Gilly Campbell spent 35-36 with the Reds backing up Hall of Famer Ernie Lombardi,

Batting Order, 1934 Los Angeles Angels							
<i>Player</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>AB</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>HR</i>	<i>RBI</i>	<i>Avg.</i>
Arnold Statz	CF	760	168	246	18	66	.324
Jimmie Reese	2B	733	123	228	3	85	.311
Marvin Gudat	LF	758	150	242	21	125	.319
Frank Demaree	RF	702	190	269	45	173	.383
Jim Oglesby	1B	725	102	226	15	139	.312
Gilly Campbell	C	459	90	140	17	97	.305
Gene Lillard	3B	592	104	171	27	119	.289
Carl Dittmar	SS	517	75	152	3	73	.294
Utility							
Bobby Mattick	INF	127	10	38	0	10	.277
Walt Goebel	C	148	16	44	2	29	.297
Truck Hannah	C/Coach	50	5	11	0	9	.220
Pitching Staff, 1934 Los Angeles Angels							
<i>Pitcher</i>	<i>CG</i>	<i>IP</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>BB</i>	<i>SO</i>	<i>W-L</i>	<i>E.R.A</i>
Emmett Nelson	12	171	157	59	71	14-5	2.53
Fay Thomas	24	295	246	118	204	28-4	2.59
Whitey Campbell	17	243	254	80	80	19-1 5	2.63
Dick Ward	13	127	136	53	54	13-4	2.63
Lou Garland	16	249	246	80	91	21-9	2.67
Roy Henshaw	11	196	149	90	120	16-4	2.75
Mike Meola	14	248	235	90	93	20-5	2.90
Jack Lelivelt, Manager							

while Marvin Gudat got 90 at-bats for the 1932 Cubs, including two hitless tries in the World Series.

Infielder Bobby Mattick was only 18 in 1934 and though an eye injury impacted his career, he later replaced Dittmar at shortstop and was the Cubs regular shortstop in 1940. Like many of the era, Mattick made a career of baseball and got back to the big leagues at age 64 in 1980 to manage the Toronto Blue Jays. Gene Lillard went to the Cubs in 1936 but couldn't supplant Stan Hack at third and then returned to the PCL to try his luck as a pitcher. He had a couple of good years in the Coast League, going 14-10 for San Francisco in 1937 and then 16-10 for the Angels in 1938--good enough for another shot in the big leagues--but his 3-5 record for the Cubs in 1939 again fell short of the mark.

Mike Gazella was 39 that year, finishing out a career that included membership on the 1927 Yankees. Jim Oglesby went to the Philadelphia A's in 1936 to replace Jimmie Foxx at first base. Foxx had been sold to the Red Sox in a cost-cutting move and A's manager Connie Mack thought Oglesby would fill the

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The Greatest? By Eric Nelson Continued from Page 7

bill nicely. He started the first three games and then contracted a serious blood disorder that sidelined him for the season. He never again played in the majors.

Among the pitchers, Roy Henshaw went 33-40 over a ten-year career but his first year was his best, a 13-5 record in spot duty for the 1935 Cubs that helped them win the pennant. He was part of a 1937 trade from Brooklyn for Cardinal shortstop Leo Durocher. Emmett Nelson began the 1935 PCL season with a bang and was sold to Cincinnati in June, where he won his

first three starts for the Reds. But arm problems derailed his career and he finished 5-4 in the majors. Fay Thomas was drafted by the St. Louis Browns that fall and posted a 7-15, 4.78 mark in 1935, his only major league trial. Lou Garland and Mike Meola, as well as Dick Ward, all pitched briefly in the majors but none of them won a game. Several 1934 Angels died young as well. Frank Demaree died at 48, Oglesby and Gudat at 50, and Ward at 57. Bobby Mattick was the last surviving member and passed away in 2004.

First Half Standings

Club	W-L	Pct.
Los Angeles	66-18	.786
Mission	48-37	.565
Sacramento	44-41	.518
San Francisco	40-45	.471
Hollywood	39-45	.464
Oakland	39-46	.459
Seattle	30-52	.366
Portland	30-52	.366

Second Half Standings

Club	W-L	Pct.
Los Angeles	71-32	.689
Hollywood	58-43	.574
Mission	53-48	.525
San Francisco	53-50	.515
Seattle	51-50	.505
Oakland	51-52	.495
Portland	36-65	.356
Sacramento	35-68	.340

1934 PCL Full Season

Club	W-L	Pct.
Los Angeles	137-50	.733
Mission	101-85	.543
Hollywood	97- 88	.524
San Francisco	93- 95	.495
Oakland	90- 98	.479
Seattle	81-102	.443
Sacramento	79-109	.420
Portland	66-117	.361

Potpourri Events Calendar

By Mark Macrae

Wednesday, January 24

Safeco Field, Seattle | 53rd Annual Hutch Award Luncheon

Presented each year in Seattle and ranked as one of the top annual awards given to a Major League Baseball player, the Hutch Award recognizes the MLB player who best exemplifies the fighting spirit and competitive desire of the legendary leader, and former PCL player / manager Fred Hutchinson.

Event starts at 11:30 A.M. and key-note speaker is Randy Johnson.

For more information visit their website at <https://www.fredhutch.org/en/-/events/hutch-award.html>.

Saturday, August 18

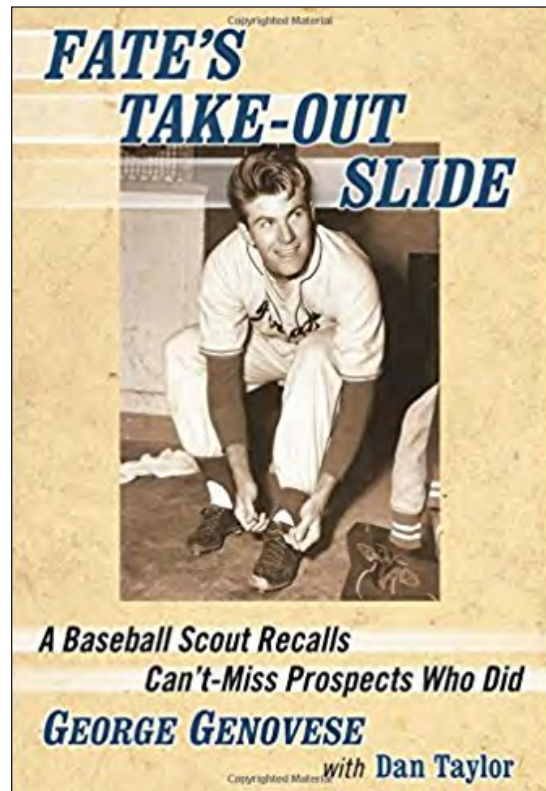
San Leandro, California | Player and Family Reunion

Ryan O'Connell Hall, 575 West Estudillo in San Leandro. The 24th Annual Dick Dobbins PCL Player and Family Reunion will be held. More details will come out as we get closer to the event.



New Book Release

FATE'S TAKE-OUT SLIDE : A Baseball Scout Recalls Can't - Miss Prospects Who Did by George Genovese and Dan Taylor was recently released. Includes profiles on former PCL players Paul Pettit and Nestor Chavez. The late Genovese also played in the PCL. Books can be ordered through Amazon.



Oral History: PCL Legend Tony Freitas *Compiled by Zak Ford*

Tony Freitas won more games, 342, than any other left-handed pitcher in minor league history. He won 228 Pacific Coast League games, including a record of six straight 20 win seasons. He also led the league in complete games four consecutive years. His big league career was short. However, he turned down multiple chances to return to the majors, stating he'd rather pitch in Sacramento, his "backyard."

These stories occurred before he pitched to major league legends and solidified his legacy as a PCL legend.

My brothers are responsible for me playing ball.

The high school coach came out to the house one day and wanted me to play. Dad said, "The boy can't because he has chores to do. We have three cows, one for each boy. He has to take care of the chores."

One word led to another and finally my brothers, Johnny and George, said, "Well, we'll do the chores so you can play ball." They had to agree to do all the chores, otherwise I would have never been able to play ball. I owe them my career.

At that point, I started at Tamalpais Union High School, playing second base. A left-handed second baseman! Never heard of such a thing? Really, a left-handed second baseman! That's when I started to play ball seriously. That was 1926, I think.

Before that, I fooled around on the sandlot like any other kid. We used a pick handle for a bat, a cow chip for a base, and a baseball had nothing but black tape wrapped around it. We couldn't keep a cover on a ball. The asphalt would just tear the heck out of the ball.

Anyway, I'm playing second base and one day the pitcher didn't show up. I said, "What the hell? I'll pitch. I'll take a whack at it." I pitched the ballgame and that was the beginning of my pitching career. I just kept on going.

A friend from Mill Valley asked me about playing professional baseball. He said, "I do a lot of duck hunting around Sacramento. I hunt with Buddy Ryan (Sacramento manager) and if it's alright with you, I'd like you to get a workout with them." He went up and told Ryan about the little left-hander by the name of Freitas. Buddy said, "Sure, bring him up." I came up and if I remember right, we were playing Kansas City in the American Association. I guess Buddy's thought, since I was so damn small (5' 7 1/2" and about 155 pounds), was "I'll just put him in against Kansas City, let him get his brains beat out and send him home." I got in against Kansas City and I think I struck out six of the first eight batters.

Buddy was still undecided then, but his wife said, "You better hang onto that kid and take a better look at him." I pitched another ballgame after that and they said, "Hey, we better sign this kid." They signed me and I was sent to Phoenix in the Arizona State League. That was 1928.

During the 1931 season, we were going to play a series in San Francisco and I was scheduled to pitch Thursday. I was sup-

posed to pitch for a scout against the Missions.

I crossed the railroad track coming off the Black Point cutoff at about 40 miles per hour. I don't know if this guy had a telephone call about a car coming a bit fast up the road, but he stepped out in front of the road and introduced himself with a ticket. I said, "Can I see the judge and get this thing straightened out?" He said, "Why not?" We took a ride up there. The judge looked at me and said, "Tony Freitas? Didn't I send you to jail the last time for speeding?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "Well, you're going back to jail."

I said, "Is there a way we can work something out? I'm scheduled to pitch on Thursday. Can I start my time, get out and pitch the ballgame, and then go back and serve my sentence?" He didn't like the idea, but he cogitated and said, "Don't tell anyone." I didn't tell anyone. We finally agreed I would start my sentence, take time off to go pitch the ball game, go back to jail and get out Sunday afternoon. He said, "I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to send a sheriff in your custody to make it legal, more or less."

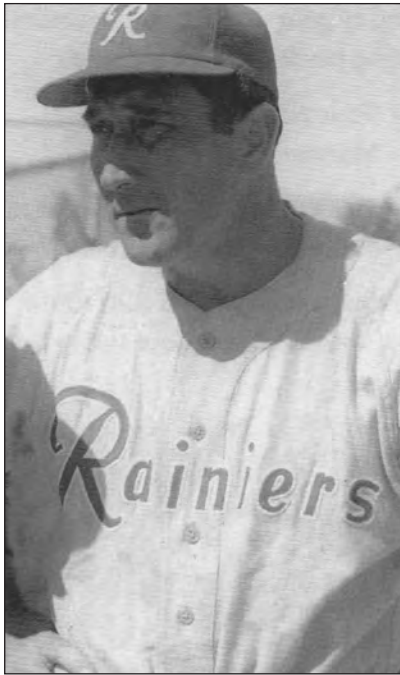
Mother and dad came up as usual and I told them about the situation. When I got out of jail, we went by the home and had a bite to eat, sheriff included. We went to the ballpark, I pitched the ballgame and got the base hit to win the game. I got done with the game, went home again, mom and dad fed us another meal, and then went back to jail.

Sunday afternoon there were reporters in front waiting for me to come out. The judge looked at me and said, "What the heck is going on here?" I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "There are reporters and photographers out there. You better use the back door." He let me out the back door and mother and dad drove me just in time to catch the train with the rest of the ball club to Los Angeles.



The Hutch Award and a Link to the PCL *By Stan Opdyke*

The **Hutch Award** was created to keep alive the memory of former Major League and Pacific Coast League player and manager Fred Hutchinson, a man whose courageous battle with cancer in 1964 was admired by everyone who witnessed it. Broadcaster Bob Prince and sportswriters Ritter Collett and Jim Enright collaborated to establish the award. Mickey Mantle was the first Hutch award recipient in 1965



Each year a current Major League player is chosen to receive the Hutch award. 53 different players have won the award. There have been no repeat recipients. The award is presented at a luncheon in Seattle, Washington, that in the last eighteen years has raised more than 6.1 million dollars for cancer research.

What follows is a list of all of the 29 Hutch Award recipients who have played in the PCL, with the PCL team or teams the player played for noted:

Jim Abbott, Vancouver Canadiens and Calgary Cannons; **Craig Biggio**, Tucson Toros; **Sid Bream**, Albuquerque Dukes; **Billy Butler**, Omaha Royals; **Jake Diekman**, Round Rock Express; **Dave Dravecky**, Hawaii Islanders and Phoenix Firebirds; **Jason Giambi**, Tacoma Tigers, Edmonton Trappers, and Colorado Sky Sox; **Alex Gordon**, Omaha Royals and Omaha Storm Chasers;

Trevor Hoffman, Nashville Sounds; **Tim Hudson**, Vancouver Canadiens and Sacramento River Cats; **Raul Ibanez**, Tacoma Rainiers and Omaha Golden Spikes; **Tommy John**, Portland Beavers; **Carney Lansford**, Tacoma Tigers and manager, Edmonton Trappers; **Mark Loretta**, Portland Beavers;

Willie McCovey, Phoenix Giants, and Tacoma Giants; **Dustin McGowan**, New Orleans Zephyrs; **Paul Molitor**, Salt Lake City Buzz; **Jamie Moyer**, Tacoma Rainiers and Las Vegas 51's; **Rick Reuschel**, Hawaii Islanders; **Tim Salmon**, Edmonton Trappers; **Curt Schilling**, Tucson Toros and Tucson Sidewinders; **Mike Sweeney**, Omaha Royals, Sacramento River Cats, and Tacoma Rainiers; **Mark Teahen**, Sacramento River Cats, Omaha

Royals, Reno Aces, and Round Rock Express; **Andre Thornton**, Eugene Emeralds; **Bobby Tolan**, Tulsa Oilers; **Omar Vizquel**, Calgary Cannons and Fresno Grizzlies; **Adam Wainwright**, Memphis Redbirds; **Bill Wegman**, Vancouver Canadiens; **Barry Zito**, Sacramento River Cats, Fresno Grizzlies and Nashville Sounds.

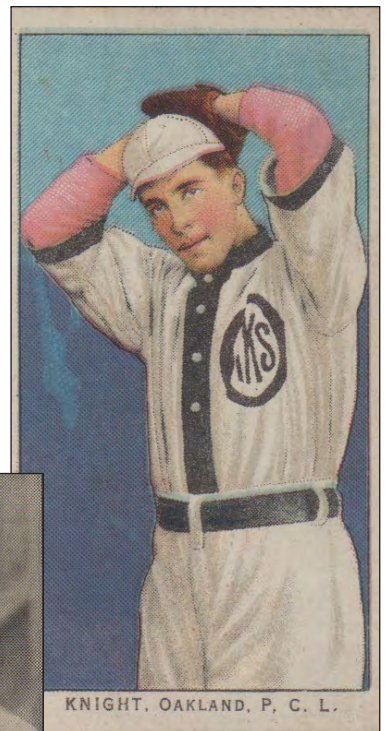
The Banning of Tobacco in the Pacific Coast League

Continued from Page 1

lasted only a few more years, the Obak and Mono insert cards remain popular more than a century later.

Today most baseball stadiums in the United States are smoke free. The others have designated smoking areas.

So as you visit the tobacco free ballparks this year, remember that there was a time when the to-



bacco companies heavily promoted their product and baseball, and at one time distributed wonderful photos of Pacific Coast League players which have outlasted their working relationship... A reminder that pitchers and catchers report in less than 45 days.

Oaks pitcher Kitty Knight was depicted in both the Obak (color) and Mono (Black & white) cigarette sets.

PCL Encyclopedia Updates *By Mark Macrae*

Contributors to this issue include Carlos Bauer, Rocky Bauer, Bob Hoie, Mark Macrae and Barry McMahon.

- 1) Gene Verble, former Seattle Rainiers infielder, died on November 4, 2017 in Kannapolis, North Carolina.
- 2) Bob Talbot, outfielder for the Angels, died on October 31, 2017 in Visalia, California. In the past Bob had attended the Southern California PCL reunions.
- 3) Bobby Doerr, Hall of Famer and former second baseman for Hollywood and San Diego died on November 13, 2017 in Junction City, Oregon.
- 4) Bob Borkowski, former Angel and Beaver, died on November 18, 2017 in Dayton, Ohio
- 5) Chuck Churn, former pitcher for Hollywood, passed away on October 21, 2017 in Lady Lake, Florida
- 6) The records belonging to a player identified as "Pinch" Thomas is actually two different players named Thomas The 1909-1910 player is Elmer Thomas (Elmer G. Thomas, born 1887 Union County, Oregon) , while the 1911 and 1923 player is Chet "Pinch" Thomas, as indicated.
- 7) Former Rainier Jungle Jim Rivera died on November 13, 2017 in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Also note that his correct birth year is 1921.
- 8) 1909 Los Angeles pitcher Miller is Charlie Miller, Throws - Right.
- 9) Howard Mundorf - middle name is Frank, Born November 25 , 1886 in Council Grove, Kansas. Died April 15, 1956 in Red Bluff, California.
- 10) The 1909 Los Angeles Thompson indicated as Howard is actually Harry Archibald Thompson, Born November 20, 1887 in Azusa, California; Died May 2, 1956 in Los Angeles, California. Height - 6' 0", Weight - 175. He also played for Vernon in 1909.
- 11) The record for 1913 Los Angeles player identified as Howard Thompson is actually Earl F. Thompson; Born June 9, 1893 in Leavenworth, Kansas ; Died August 10, 1977 in Ojai, California. Height - 5' 11", Weight-163, Bats-Right, Throws-Right.
- 12) 1909 Oakland Ferdy Johnson was exclusively a pitcher. A player named Will Johnson was the Outfielder.
- 13) New Player - Mutt McGinty played 1B for Portland in the last game of the 1909 season.
- 14) 1909 - The official statistics combined the records of Jimmy Adams and Spider Adams even though they played in different cities on the same dates a number of times. Jimmy played for Vernon, Spider for Sacramento.
- 15) New Player - Louis C. "Ice" Hall, pitcher for Los Angeles in 1909. Move stats for 1909 ONLY from Warren "Rusty" Hall.
- 16) 1910 Portland Kratzberg , Bernard Charles Kratzberg ; Born July 12, 1887 Greeley, Kansas. Died November 16, 1958 Cochise County, Az; Height - 6'2", W-175, Bats-Right, Throws - Right.
- 17) New Player - Jack Karen Kallio, Born June 13, 1918 in Portland, Oregon. Died September 11, 1991 Waldport, Oregon. Height - 6'2". Jack pitched 2 games for Portland in 1940. His record was listed in his father Rudy's compilation.

While researching the 1909 PCL season, Carlos Bauer stumbled across an article in the Portland Oregonian , Sunday September 26 edition, describing Courtesy Runners.

"Elmer Koestner, running for Johnny Beall in the first inning, gets credit for a stolen base. Beall walked in the first inning. Elmer Koestner then ran for him and stole second base. When the inning was over Beall went out to play first base, with Koestner returning to the bench."

Epilogue *By Mark Macrae*



We are now entering our second year of the enhanced PCL Historical Society. I'd like to thank the members of our Advisory Committee for their support and input, our members for their feedback, and our readers for their kind words.

Special mention and thanks go to Joye Ogrodowski who has vol-

unteered to format all of the articles and photos into a great looking newsletter...

This is traditionally the time of year where membership dues are paid. However, after reviewing last year's operating costs, we will continue for at least another year without charging any dues.

The newsletters will continue to come out quarterly (next issue around Opening Day) and we continue to encourage your feedback and participation.



Pacific Coast League

POTPOURRI

APRIL 2018

PACIFIC COAST LEAGUE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

VOL. 32, NO. 2

President Emeritus

Dick Beverage

Director

Mark Macrae

Advisory Committee

Dave Eskenazi

Zak Ford

Bob Hoie

Alan O'Connor

Joye Ogrodowski

Ray Saraceni

Bill Swank

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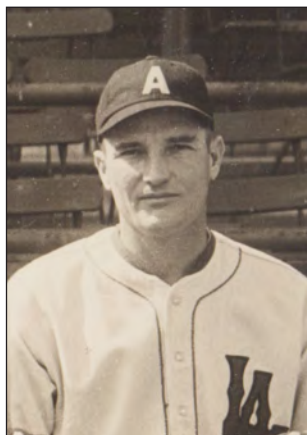
- Welcome to Opening Day by Mark Macrae
- Rabbit McHale by Alan O'Connor
- How Artie Wilson Broke Baseball's Color Barrier by Gaylon White
- Sick's Stadium Sign Replacement by Mark Macrae
- Spring Training in Hawaii by Joye Ogrodowski
- V for Victory Pins by Mark Macrae
- PCL Encyclopedia Updates by Mark Macrae
- Casey Stengel was Wally Westlake's Turning Point by Zak Ford
- Johnny Ritchey - the PCL's Jackie Robinson By Bill Swank

* Events Calendar

Welcome to Opening Day 2018 *By Mark Macrae*

Welcome to Opening Day, 2018. Many of you will be reading this before the Sacramento Rivercats open in Tacoma tonight at 7 PM (Pacific) and start another exciting season of PCL baseball. The astute among you will also notice that this edition is four days late, being released on April 5th rather than April 1st. There is a reason for this, and we hope that you understand why this was done. The formal announcement for the 2018 Pacific Coast League Hall of Fame is today, and we are happy to announce two inductees added to the ranks of the all-time greats.

The first is Marv Gudat, inducted as a player. Marv was born in Texas on August 27, 1903 but grew up in San Diego. He entered pro ball in 1926 with the Monroe Drillers in the (Class D) Cotton States League. He later played part of two seasons in the Major Leagues with the Cincinnati Reds and Chicago Cubs.



Marv Gudat

The Cubs sent Marv to the Los Angeles Angels in 1933 where he excelled in the outfield, occasionally covering first base and even filling in as a pitcher. His team finished first in both 1933 and 1934. In 1934, Marv led the PCL with 13 triples (tied with teammate Jigger Statz) , as part of that great Angels team.

Wherever Marv played he was popular with the fans. Frequent calls of "Who dat Gudat ?" and "Gudat doo dat" never got to him or affected his performance. He spent thirteen seasons in the PCL with Los Angeles, Oakland,

Hollywood and San Diego ; appearing in 1,841 games. He hit .309 or higher during seven seasons and retired from the PCL with a .307 lifetime batting average, despite a number of injuries during his PCL years. These included a broken leg, a broken rib and a serious knee injury. Marv retired from the PCL, and baseball, in 1945



Dick Dobbins

Dick Dobbins, inducted as a historian. Richard Trowbridge Dobbins, more commonly known as Dick, was born December 9, 1934 in Berkeley, California. At an early age, Dick developed an interest in sports and photography. Dick began taking pictures of the Pacific Coast League players in the late 1940's. He would develop these photos later that day, using the family bathroom as a converted dark room and return to the ballpark the next day to have the photos signed. He maintained lifelong friendships with many of these players.

By the late 1950's Dick's collection of baseball items began to grow significantly. He worked with the San Francisco Seals in putting together a pictorial history featured in one of their publications. In 1957, Dick went to the site of the Emeryville ballpark to take some pictures of the soon-to-be demolished ballpark. On the overgrown field he noticed several papers blowing in the wind. As he looked closer these were player contracts. He followed the trail back to a

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"Rabbit" McHale *By Alan O'Connor*

My introduction to professional baseball came as a young fan of the Pacific Coast League Sacramento Solons in the 1950s. Later in life I became intrigued by the history of Sacramento baseball from the 1880s through the 1970s. Among my favorite players is a speedster named Robert Emmet "Rabbit" "Bob" McHale. He had a 19-year professional baseball career, primarily as an outfielder, much of it in Sacramento.

McHale was born February 25, 1872 in Michigan Bluff, California (near Auburn) to Irish immigrant parents who had come to California with the Gold Rush. After playing sandlot baseball and town ball for a few years, Rabbit caught on with the Sacramento Altas in the California League in 1889. Bob split time in 1890 between the outfield, catching and third base in 123 games for the same team (now renamed the Sacramento Senators). 1891 was an off year for McHale as he played in only 72 games for three California League teams, the Sacramento Senators, San Jose Dukes and Oakland Colonels.



Rabbit with the 1906 Cordovas

There are no baseball records for McHale in 1892 and 1894, but in 1893 he played 22 games for the California League Sacramento Senators/Stockton River Pirates, in the outfield and catching, and hitting .359.

In 1895 and 1896 McHale was behind the plate, in the outfield and at second base for the St. Joseph Saints in the Western Association, hitting a respectable .327 his second year. Later in 1896 Rabbit played for both the Minneapolis Millers and the Milwaukee Brewers of the Western League, playing every position except pitcher, with a .309 batting average. He spent 1897 as a regular outfielder for the Toronto Canucks in Eastern League where he hit .292.

Rabbit was on the move in 1898 playing in 127 games for four teams: Sacra-



*1890 Sacramento Senators
McHale is in the front row on the right*

mento Gilt Edge in the California League, the Rochester Patriots in the Eastern League, the Hamilton Hams in the Canadian League, and, the National League Washington Senators. In 1899 McHale was back with the Gilt Edge, but spent most of the season with the Bristol Bell Makers (68 games) in the Connecticut League and the Rochester Broncos (39 games) in the Eastern League.

McHale went west again in 1900 splitting time between the Pueblo Indians in the Western League and the Stockton Wasps in the California League. In 1901 he hit the road playing for the California League San Francisco Wasps and for the Western League's Colorado Springs Millionaires and Denver Grizzlies. In 1902 he settled down to become a regular outfielder (119 games) for San Francisco in the California League.

McHale spent most of 1903 through 1907 as a regular outfielder for the Denver Grizzlies in the Western League hitting .270. However, late in 1906 he returned to Sacramento in the outfield for the California State League Sacramento Cordovas. In 1908 Rabbit was in the outfield again for the Sacramento California State League team, renamed the Senators. He finished his professional career in 1909 with the Sacramento Senators (by then also nicknamed the Solons) when the team entered the PCL. After his baseball career, McHale raised his family in Sacramento and worked 35 years for the Pacific Gas and Electric Company. He passed away in Sacramento in 1952.

Rabbit has the distinction of being the only ball player to have been a Sacramento Alta, Senator, Gilt Edge, Cordova and Solon!

Singles and Smiles:

How Artie Wilson Broke Baseball's Color Barrier by Gaylon White

By Gaylon White

Artie Wilson, the first black player to win a Pacific Coast League batting title, is the subject of a new book by Gaylon White titled, *Singles and Smiles: How Artie Wilson Broke Baseball's Color Barrier*. The book, published by Rowman and Littlefield, will be released in April 2018.

Artie broke into the Coast League in 1949 with the San Diego Padres and six weeks into the season was sent to Oakland. He went on to hit .348 and steal 47 bases, both tops in the league. None of his 211 hits were homers. In nine seasons with five PCL teams (Padres, Oaks, Rainiers, Beavers and Solons), he accumulated 1,566 hits (1,328 of them singles), scored 758 runs, stole 159 bases and batted .314. Twice he finished second in batting. Five times he had more than 200 hits in a season. He also led the league at least once in such categories as hits, runs scored, singles, triples, stolen bases and times at bat.

Artie did all this without the tip of his right thumb, cut off in an accident when he worked for the American Cast Iron Pipe Company (ACIPCO) in Birmingham. "I always told him he would've hit .350 if he'd had his thumb," said George Freese, who played against Artie in the PCL and a golf partner in Portland where they both lived after retiring from baseball. "Had Artie been given the opportunity to play with the Giants or anybody in the major leagues, there's no doubt in my mind that he would've been up in the top-ten hitters of the league," said



Artie with cigar, signing autographs for kids...Surrounded by young admirers, Artie Wilson flashed his signature smile for the camera while signing autographs outside the Oakland Oaks clubhouse. Doug McWilliams is the boy in the dark shirt with his back to the camera. He grew up to be a Topps baseball card photographer and Artie's biggest fan.

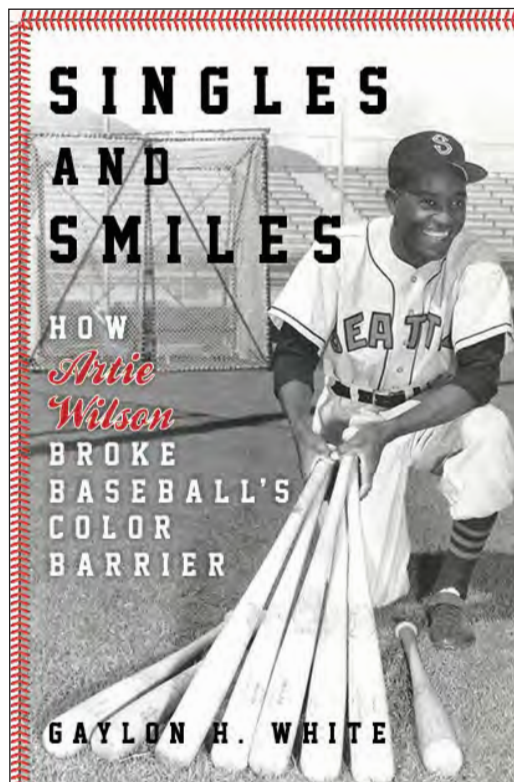
Doug McWilliams Collection

Chuck Stevens, who played against Artie and coached him in the PCL.

In 1951, at the age of 30, Artie quickly passed through the majors with the New York Giants. He started just one game, batting a mere 24 times. He slapped four singles, walked twice, swiped two bases, scored two runs and batted in another to hit .182 – barely more than the 162 pounds he weighed. Big league baseball passed him by but Artie knew from five all-star seasons with the Birmingham Black Barons in the Negro American League that he belonged in the majors. He batted .402 for the Black Barons in 1948, the last pro player in a top-level league to surpass the .400 mark, the Holy Grail of hitting. Artie was the 13th black player to appear in the majors after Jackie Robinson broke in with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947. "There wasn't nobody who saw me and Jackie in 1945 who wouldn't tell you but one thing," he once told author Roger Kahn. "I was the best shortstop. There isn't nobody with intelligence who wouldn't tell you something else. For integrating baseball, Jackie was the best man." Artie also was the first black to cross the white lines for the Seattle Rainiers. "He was one of the great players in the Coast League and a great in-between guy because he got along with the white guys as well as he did with the black guys," said Eddie Basinski, who played with and against Artie in the PCL. "Artie was a credit to baseball."

Even umpires adored Artie. "Boy, was he joyous," said Cece Carlucci, a PCL umpire for 12 years. "He was jumping up and

Continued on Page 4



Singles and Smiles *Continued from Page 3*

down and laughing. One of the best-liked fellows in the entire league. They loved him. Just a fabulous guy. We loved to see him come to bat because we knew we weren't going to have any trouble on a ball and strike call. I don't remember calling a strike on him. Anything close, he was swinging." Artie batted left-handed and most of his hits were singles to left field. "He was tough to play against because he sprayed the ball," said Basinski. "It was hard to position yourself and for a pitcher to pitch to him because he was pretty good at hitting almost any kind of a pitch – high or low, inside or outside."

Singles and smiles were Artie's trademarks. "My dad had a classic smile," said Artie Jr. "He had a smile that made you smile and made you want to know him because it was such a sincere smile." Artie was always smiling because, for him, baseball was still a child's game. And he was getting paid to play it. "He loved baseball more than any guy I ever run into," said Basinski, a teammate at Portland in 1955. "On an off day, he'd call me and

some of the other guys and say, 'Hey, let's go out to the ballpark anyway and play pepper.' The guy just loved the game so much."

Singles and Smiles traces Artie's life from Birmingham, Alabama, where he was born in 1920 to Portland where he lived 55 years and died in 2010 at the age of 90. White interviewed dozens of Coast League players as well as Willie Mays, a teammate on the Black Barons in 1948. Artie was the player the Giants sent to the minors in 1951 to make room on the roster for Willie. "Artie Wilson was one of the guys who watched out for me when I played for the Black Barons," Willie said. "In turn, I watched Artie. That year, he hit .402! That was a lesson in hitting that I always remembered."

Singles and Smiles retails for \$35 and can be purchased online at www.rowman.com and www.amazon.com. A signed copy of the book can be obtained from the author for \$30, including shipping. Contact Gaylon White at the following address: 401 Sugarwood Drive, Kingsport, TN 37663. You can also call him at 423-367-8028.

Sick's Stadium Sign Replacement *by Mark Macrae*



The Northwest chapter of the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR) is spearheading a movement to replace the current Sicks' Stadium commemorative sign situated next to Lowe's Home Improvement store at the corner of McClellan Street and Rainier Avenue.

The existing sign is badly deteriorated and not very prominent, due to tree growth. The chairman of our committee, Anthony Salazar, met with city officials and the Lowe's manager. Both showed enthusiasm for the project. Furthermore, Mr. Salazar commissioned a local artist to construct a prototype sign model that harkens back to the large, marquee sign that once

stood on Rainier Avenue.

In fact, our hope is to erect the new sign in approximately the same location. A former bus stop landing now occupies the site. If given the "go ahead" by Seattle city officials and Lowe's, Northwest SABR will begin a fundraising campaign.

The national SABR organization is well versed in the mechanics of money-raising for former stadium signage, since this is a major initiative within the organization.

We plan to use the SABR organization office in Phoenix, Arizona, as the conduit for managing donations. SABR is a 501 C 3 registered, non-profit organization.

1946 Seals Set Sail for Spring Training in Hula-Hula Land *By Joye Ogradowski*



SF Seals' manager, Francis Joseph O'Doul, fondly known as The Professor.

At around 6pm on the evening of Thursday, February 14, 1946, the San Francisco Seals boarded the SS Aleutian to begin a five-day, nearly 2,500 mile journey to Honolulu, the first time in Pacific Coast League history a baseball team hailing from California had made such a spring training odyssey.

Once outside the Golden Gate, threatening skies, choppy seas, and rolling decks religated many of the players to their bunks in an effort to ease the effects of seasickness.

Will Connolly, San Francisco Chronicle sports writer, one of a brigade of reporters who accompanied the team on their excursion, wrote often of the suffering Seals. "The Seals batted about .333 in the Seasick League aboard the SS Aleutian the first day out of port, which is to say one-third of the traveling party came down with the curse. Trainer Leo Hughes came equipped with a box of seasickness pills, but before 10 o'clock was fresh out. Pitcher Doug Oliver and infielder Charlie Petersen were his most difficult patients, but neither is mortally ill, although both think so. Peterson was bemoaning his luck in not missing the boat."

It was a crying shame. The meals served aboard ship were fit for kings: excellent food, generous portions, varied selection. For breakfast, for instance, a player could order fruit juice, French prunes, figs, one of several cereals, rolled oats, lamb or pork chops, fried sole, silver smelts, or salmon bellies, eggs any style, gobs of butter, muffins, tea or coffee...As Connolly explained, "It made the athletes mad as hornets to ponder all that and much more, for lunch and dinner was in the dining room waiting to be consumed, free, and they weren't able to leave their bunks, what with the tossing seas. They settled for sucking lemons." Or, in some cases, downing scads of crackers and copious amounts and Gingerale.

Smoother sailing and bluer waters made the second day of the trip pleasant. With the athletes on their feet again, O'Doul twitted them; "If we play ball like we sail, this club will land in last place."

After smooth sailing Saturday, the Pacific kicked up a rain squall Sunday, driving passengers indoors again. O'Doul spent his time, on his bunk, dividing the team into two squads, the Maroons, for the color of their caps, would be led by O'Doul himself; the Whites, named for their white home uniforms, would be shepherded by Joe Sprinz and Del Young. Each team was a combination of both young and experienced players, to make things even.

The Maroons: pitchers Cliff Melton, Milt Cadinha, Mel Harner, Larry Jansen, Doug Oliver, Frank Rosso, and Elmer Orella; Infielders Ferris Fain, Harry Goorabian, Roy Nicely, Don Trower, and Ray Perry; catchers Bruce Ogradowski and Norm Schlueter; outfielders Kermit Lewis, Neill Sheridan, and



The San Francisco Seals bid farewell to a crowd of family, friends, and fans as they head to Honolulu for spring training aboard the SS Aleutian. From left to right: Ed Stutz, Elias Castro, Ted Jennings, Don White, Francis Rosso, Cliff Melton, Ray Perry, Roy Nicely, Al Lien, Ferris Fain and Bill Werle.

Photo Courtesy of the San Francisco Public Library

Sal Taormina.

The Whites: Pitchers Ray Harrell, Elias Castro, Bob Chesnes, Bob Jensen, Al Lien, Bill Kelly, Eddie Stutz, and Bill Werle; infielders Bones Sanders, Del Young, Joe Hoover, Charlie Petersen, Ted Jennings; catchers Joe Sprinz and Mel Ivy; outfielders Bernie Uhalt, Bill Enos, and Don White.

(The Whites went on to win the series against the Maroons four games to one.)

As the steam ship slowly approached its destination, Captain Carl Nilsen, skipper of the Aleutian, halted the ship outside the harbor in Honolulu at 7am, an hour before she was due to dock, in order to accommodate public dignitaries, sports writers, and cameramen wanting a sneak peak at the O'Doulmen.

Players began walking down the gangplank around 8am, Wednesday, February 21, and were greeted with a civic reception and parade. Connolly reported: "The voyagers were serenaded by the Royal Hawaiian Band and chanters, resplendent on the pier in glistening white uniforms. On the starboard side, Hawaiian boys dived for coins in adherence to custom. Ball players marveled at how the boys caught the dimes and quarters before the silver had sunk more than a few feet under water. Pennies they did not go for.

"A mile long parade of more than 50 private cars, fire engines, and official vehicles wound through the downtown streets, sirens blowing and horns honking. O'Doul was urged to ride the fire truck up ahead and did not need much urging."



Continued on Page 6

Spring Training in Hawaii continued from page 5

The players were booked into the Moana Hotel, which opened in 1901 as Waikiki's first such establishment. It was a rambling wooden structure built in the shape of a U, painted flat white, and situated in the midst of lush gardens, a stone's throw from Waikiki Beach. Members of the press "had to put up with" a 17-room "shack" owned by co-owner Paul I. Fagan, close to Diamond Head and complete with servants.

The Seals played a concentrated schedule of 19 games compressed into little more than two weeks; 15 games against the Hawaii All-Stars, and four against the Trickers, a local semi-pro team. The series opened on Friday night, March 8, and featured three daytime double headers on three successive Saturdays and Sundays, all in preparation for the PCL opener at Seals Stadium March 29 against the Seattle Rainiers, the first opening night game in San Francisco history (according to the SF Chronicle).

A week before the games were to begin, the Hawaii All-Stars threatened to strike. They were demanding \$300.00 for expenses to play in the series, up from the \$100.00 they had agreed to. The Seals were not involved in the dispute over finances, and both President Charles Graham and Manager Lefty O'Doul were determined to stay out of the picture. They felt that the issue was between the stadium management and the local players. In addressing the issue with the players, O'Doul called a team meeting and told the players to "mind their own business." The dispute was eventually settled, in a compromise, and the games were played.

All official exhibition games took place at Honolulu Stadium, lovingly nicknamed the Termite Palace. Broadcaster Al Michaels called games for the Hawaii Islanders of the PCL from 1968 to 1970, and gave his take on the stadium (courtesy of Rory Costello/SABR): "The termites were having a field day. The

grass was very, very green, and the stadium looked like a jewel. It had that classic ballpark aroma, with some Hawaiian delicacies in there too, like pipikaula and manapua... and the smell of beer and cigarette smoke and old wood."

While spring training is traditionally no walk in the park, the players did have some days off. They accepted an invitation from the exclusive Outrig-

ger Canoe Club on Waikiki, and went surf riding in big war canoes of five and ten-capacity. As Connolly put it, "Some liked it; some didn't. Only Milt Cadinha, Bruce Ogrodowski, Frank Rosso, Elmer Orella, Bones Sanders, and Roy Nicely begged off, either being fearful of the water or unsure of the canoes. Three of the five craft were swamped and the athletes had to tread water in the relatively shallow depths while

expert helmsmen bailed them out." The canoe that Manager O'Doul rode in swamped twice. The canoe captained by Duke Kahamamoku had no trouble at all. The men in Duke's canoe were eager to ride again. Those in O'Doul's craft weren't sure it was fun.

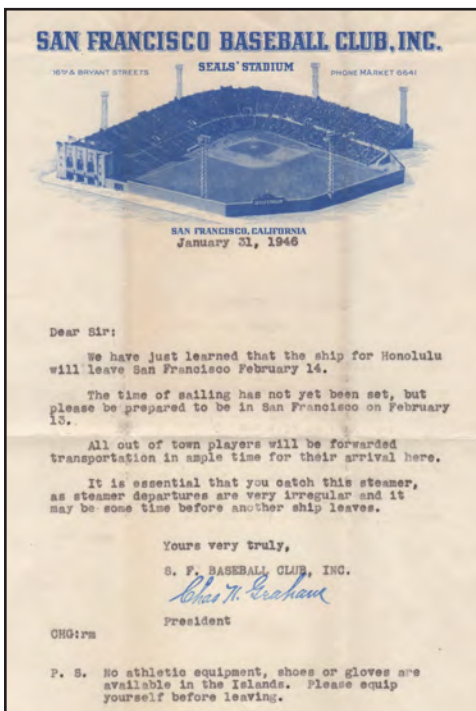
The Resident Players Association invited the team to the Ishii Tea Garden for their first taste of raw fish. They took their shoes off as they entered, and sat on the mat-covered floor. Some men were cramped and uncomfortable, and opted to eat in a prone position. Knives and forks were not provided, despite the Seals' protests that they could not handle chopsticks. Connolly explained that "The infielders seemed to fumble the food with the sticks less than the outfielders, and the catchers were the most clumsy of all. In desperation, Mel Ivy, Joe Sprinz, and Bruce Ogrodowski picked up the food in their fingers. "This," complained Ogrodowski, indicating the chopsticks, "is like trying to eat with two catcher's mitts on."

While O'Doul was hard put to remember a spring training quite like this one, with the men getting into top shape and progressing so quickly, he bemoaned their lack of hitting early on. He even had the bleachers in center field painted dark green, because the light gray afforded a poor background for his hitters. In addition to worrying about hitting,

Lefty also agonized over his pitchers and position players. It had been a long while since he had been faced with such a surplus of talent, knowing there weren't enough slots for all of them.

Whatever O'Doul did during spring training and throughout the season, it worked. The Seals won the pennant with 115 wins against just 68 losses. The team as a whole batted only .256, but they hit when it counted, and scored a total of 787 runs, while allowing 592. The pitchers were exceptional. Larry Jansen went 30-6, Cliff Melton, 17-12, and Ray Harrell, 13-6.

The Seals played the Hollywood Stars in the playoffs, beating them 4 games to 0, then went on to beat the Oakland Oaks in the finals, 4 games to 2.

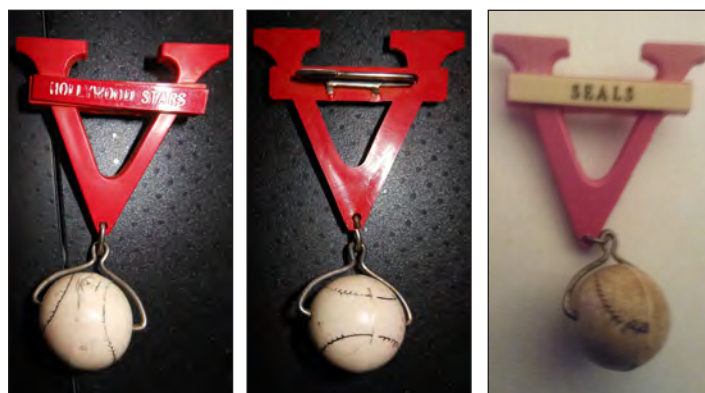


“V” FOR VICTORY PINS *By Mark Macrae*

A recent note from reader Martin Jacobs acknowledged that he had just acquired a uniquely designed baseball pin related to the San Francisco Seals. The red plastic “V” shaped pin was similar to other pins produced in the early 1940’s supporting the war effort. His pin, however featured the Seals on the nameplate and it was the first one that he had seen related to the Pacific Coast League.

I have a similar pin that features the Hollywood Stars on the nameplate that I acquired about twenty years ago. These are the only two PCL teams that I have seen with this design. While likely related to the war effort, I’ve never encountered a person who remembered, firsthand, seeing these in distribution.

My call out to the readers of the Potpourri. Are there any of you who remember acquiring these pins? Are the Stars and Seals the only teams featured on these pins, or were other teams (perhaps ALL) featured? If any readers have additional informa-



tion or other teams featured on these pins, please advise. I’ll share any additional information with our readers in a future edition of the Potpourri.

PCL Encyclopedia Updates *By Mark Macrae*

Contributors to this issue include Carlos Bauer, Rocky Bauer, Dick Beverage, Tom Larwin, Mark Macrae, Barry McMahon

- 1) Andy Petersen born in Blackfoot, Idaho....Died 5-26-84
- 2) Laurin Pepper passed away on February 4, 2018 in Ocean Springs, Mississippi
- 3) Additional info on One-gamer Mutt McGinty..... Born Oliver R. McGinty in Arkansas in 1873. Died Nov 26, 1945 in Reno, Nevada.... Additional bio from a grandson.. McGinty was a painting contractor in Los Angeles. According to a note in the LA Herald, McGinty worked out with the LA club. He appeared in the final game of the 1909 season playing for Portland while they were playing in Los Angeles. In 1910 he shows up in both the census and LA City directories as a painter. By 1912 he moved to Reno, Nevada where he became the largest painting contractor in the city.
- 4) Heinie Krug - Throws-Left
- 5) Ernie Fazio passed away on December 1, 2017 in Danville, California. Ernie played for Oklahoma City, Vancouver and Hawaii in the PCL
- 6) Former Vancouver Mounties outfielder Tito Francona passed away on February 13, 2018 in New Brighton, Pa
- 7) Rob Picciolo passed away on January 3, 2018 in Los Angeles, Ca. Rob played for Tucson, San Jose and Vancouver in the PCL.
- 8) Tracy Stallard passed away on December 6, 2017 in Kingsport, Tennessee. He played for Seattle and Tulsa in the PCL.
- 9) Dick Gernert passed away on November 30, 2017 in Reading, Pennsylvania. Dick played for Tacoma in the PCL.
- 10) Don Prince passed away on November 8, 2017 in Myrtle Beach, SC. He played for Salt Lake City in the PCL
- 11) Dubois (Oakland 1911) is Cecil Dubois, common nickname is Rummy but also known as Runt. Born October 26, 1886 in Grant City, Missouri ; Died November 28, 1919 in Orange, California. He was tried out with Oakland in a game played in Los Angeles in 1911. A right handed pitcher, he also played outfield for Santa Ana High, then went on to play for Santa Ana in the 1910 Southern California Trolley League. He played independent ball for Santa Ana up through 1915. He attended Occidental after graduating from Santa Ana High. At the time of his death in 1919 he owned THE SMOKEHOUSE restaurant in Santa Ana. His wife continued to run the business after his death. Although born in Missouri his family was living in Santa Ana by the time he was three.
- 12) Fitzhenry (Los Angeles 1911) is John Thomas Fitzhenry, born August 23, 1887 in San Francisco, California ; Died January 1983 in San Rafael, California. Bats and Throws Left....He played semi pro ball in San Francisco and San Rafael.
- 13) NEW PLAYER - William “Bill” Osborne , who played 3B for a number of seasons in the Central Valley, got a tryout with Vernon in September 1910 in Sacramento (at the time he was playing for an independent club in Courtland). His baseball career ended with Stockton in the Cal State League in 1915.
- 14) Curt Raydon, pitcher for the Hollywood Stars in the 50’s passed away on March 3, 2018 in Sam Rayburn, Texas.
- 15) Former Padre Rudy Regalado passed away on February 12, 2018 in San Diego, California. Rudy attended several of the Southern California PCL reunions back in the 90’s.
- 16) Lil Arnerich passed away on March 9, 2018 at his home in Alameda, California. An expanded obituary will be in this issue.
- 17) Ed Charles, former Vancouver Mountie died on March 15, 2018 in East Elmhurst, Queens, New York.

Oral History: Stengel Was Westlake's Turning Point *Compiled by Zak Ford*

Wally Westlake found major league success as a rookie in 1947. An All Star in 1951, he hit 127 home runs over 10 big league seasons. However, just a year before reaching the majors, he struggled to make the Oakland Oaks. He credits legendary manager Casey Stengel for developing him as a player in 1946.

At 97, Westlake is the oldest living former National League player and All Star.

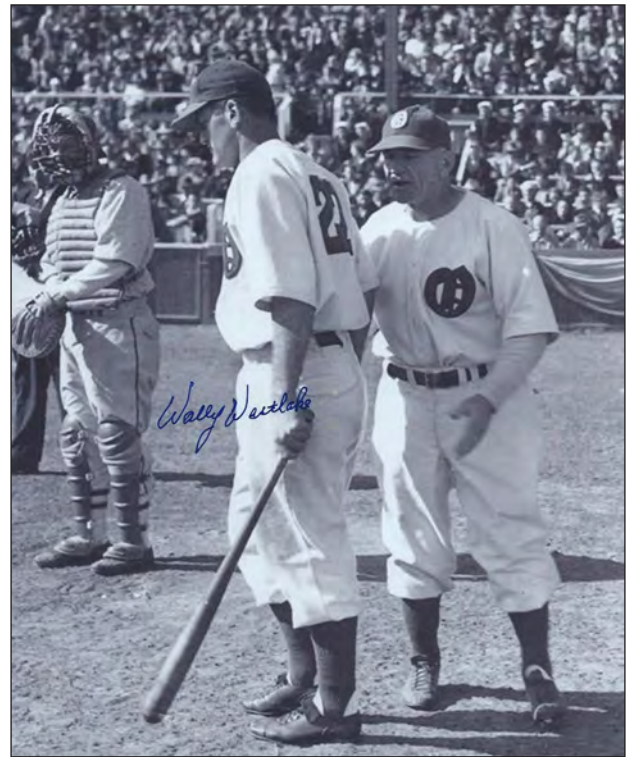
I got married in April of 1944 when I was in the service and in December of 1945, our first child was born. Vic Devincenzi, the Oakland Oaks owner, offered me \$325 a month and I told him, "I can't take this." I wanted \$600, which seemed like a lot of money. He wouldn't give it to me and said, "You're not going to make the ball club."

Casey Stengel had become the manager and he brought a lot of old players and top minor league players with him to build the ball club. Devincenzi said, "We're going to send you to Yakima." I said, "No you're not. I'm 25. I'm out of time. I don't have time to fart around now." I said, "I'll go to spring training without a contract. If I make the ball club, you pay me the \$600. If I don't, I'll go home." He laughed at me, "Go ahead, if that's what you're doing."

I went to spring training and busted my butt. There was another guy with me in the same boat, Mel Duezabou, who had been with the ball club prior to the war and we were good friends. We went through spring training, the both of us, and we busted our butts. We'd stay there and take extra batting practice and never got to hit with the regulars. The regulars got to hit nice brand new balls everyday for batting practice. One day we said, "The hell with this! We've been with this ball club and we have to hit these goddamn marshmallows!" I said, "Step in there! Let's see if we can get a few rips at those balls!" We got up there, hit those new balls, and watched the rotation. When it was our turn to hit, we hit again. We walked up there the third time and were standing by the batting cage. Here comes this rotten old voice of Stengel, "I didn't tell Duezabou and Westlake to hit!" That's all he said. He didn't tell us to get out, he just let everyone know he didn't tell us to hit.

Stengel would never come to anyone. There was no communication, he just ran the ball club. There was a lineup. If you're in it, you're playing. If not, you're not playing. He hardly ever associated with Duez and I. When we played intersquad, we were always on the second team. We were never in the starting lineup. So, finally we're breaking camp and in the morning, we had a short workout. Stengel was sitting over on the bench and called both of our names out, "Duezabou, Westlake, come over here!" We thought, "Oh shit!" He said, "Duezabou, sit down here. Westlake, sit there." He said, "I'm taking you two boys with me." Good god! I came off that bench straight up about 10 feet! All that time I went through spring training and I didn't get to play with the first squad and opening day, I'm the centerfielder. I couldn't believe it.

I'll tell you what. That was the turning point for my professional career. I had been away for three years and I only thought I knew how to play baseball. When I went to the major leagues,



*Wally Westlake and Casey Stengel
Oakland Oaks 1946*

I didn't realize how lucky I was. I knew how to play after a summer with him. He really taught me how to play baseball. If it wasn't for him, I might not have ever been able to make it. At first when I was playing, those old timers wouldn't tell you the time of day. If you were going to learn, you were going to learn the hard way. They weren't going to teach you and then have you take their job. That was the attitude. With Stengel, it was the other way around. He knew I was having trouble with breaking ball pitching, so the first two weeks of the season, he nursed me along. The guys who didn't have good breaking pitching, he'd play me against them. Finally, I caught up, and the last four months of the season I played everyday.

I had no idea about running bases. I thought all you did was run from one base to another, but he got with me about what to look for and how to take the advantage. He taught me simple little things no one ever told me. When you're on first base, as soon as the pitcher gets on the mound and gets his sign, take a quick look at the outfielders behind you, especially the right fielder. You want to know where he is. Is he playing in? Is he playing back? Is he playing the line? Can he run? Can he throw? Is he righthanded or lefthanded? If the ball is hit to his glove side and he has to turn to throw, you can beat him by maybe two steps if you know these things. Little things like those make a hell of a difference.

After I was up about two years, I realized young guys would come up and not know how the hell to play at the major league level. They had to learn there. I realized how lucky I was at my age to spend a season with him.

70 Years Ago, Johnny Ritchey was The Jackie Robinson of the Pacific Coast League *By Bill Swank*

On April 1, 1948, San Diego Union sportswriter Mitch Angus wrote, "Johnny Ritchey gathered in a 'first' for a Negro ball player last night when he singled sharply off Schmidt's leg as a ninth-inning pinch-hitter."

Padres manager, James "Rip" Collins, a former member of the famed St. Louis Cardinals "Gas House Gang" with Dizzy Dean, was enthusiastic about the rookie. "He's definitely one of the gang and stands ace-high with all the players. Unless someone happens to mention it, none of us is aware of the fact that he's the first colored player in Coast League history."

In 1947, when Jackie Robinson broke "the color barrier" in Major League Baseball, San Diego native-born son, John F. Ritchey, was playing for the Chicago American Giants and led the Negro Leagues in batting. His average was reportedly between .369 and .386, because statistics in the Negro Leagues were not always consistent.

Johnny would become the Jackie Robinson of the Pacific Coast League when he signed a contract with his home town San Diego Padres on November 22, 1947.

When the 1948 season began, the Padres already had two catchers, Len Rice and Hank Camelli, with major league experience, on their roster. Collins noted, "With our abundance of catchers, the odds are that Johnny will be farmed out this season." Then, only one game into the season, almost like a movie script, Rice hurt his hand. The next day, Camelli was also injured. John Ritchey suddenly found himself behind the plate and the Padres were pleased to have his potent bat in the lineup.

In his first eleven plate appearances, Johnny collected seven hits including a game winning home run against the Los Angeles Angels. After the first full week of the season, Ritchey was among league leaders with a .500 batting average (8 for 16).

"It was a thrill to play for the Padres. The fans cheered and my feeling was it was because I was a San Diego boy making good. It had nothing to do with race. A lot of friends and family members were in the stands at Lane Field. It felt good just to get a turn at bat, but I grounded out to the first baseman (in his first at bat)," said Ritchey.

Eddie Burbridge, sports editor for the Los Angeles based African-American newspaper California Eagle wrote, "After the game, a crowd of kids of mixed races gathered around Ritchey for his autograph which shows what the fans think of him. He was cheered every time he went to bat."

Despite predominately positive comments in the newspapers about Johnny's acceptance by teammates and racial tolerance throughout the league, there was an undercurrent that took a toll on him.

On the road, Ritchey stayed in the team hotel, but he didn't have a roommate. When racial comments were made on the field or pitchers threw at him, Johnny felt his teammates should have backed him up. Quiet and reserved by nature, Johnny's



Padres owner Bill Starr and John Ritchey (Starr was a catcher for the Padres in the 1930s)

humility and demeanor disguised his pride, sensitivity and self-respect.

Coming of age in San Diego, his teammates were from various racial backgrounds and they were also his friends. When he played professional baseball, Johnny realized that not all of his teammates were his friends.

Jim Gleason, a teammate at San Diego State College and later with the Padres, called him, "Johnny Baseball." He remembered Johnny always wore a smile and was the enthusiastic leader of an excellent 1946 Aztec baseball team. Gleason noticed subtle changes in his friend as he observed his interactions with Padres teammates.

Ballplayers routinely lied about their age. Described as between 22 and 24 years of age, former Army Staff Sgt. John Ritchey was actually a 25-year-old combat veteran who earned five battle citations serving in an engineer battalion that saw action in both the European and Pacific Theaters. He was by no means a naive young rookie.

When Rice and Camelli returned from their injuries, Ritchey was primarily used as a pinch hitter and occasional starter in Sunday doubleheaders. Late in the season, during a rare start, he went five for five against the Hollywood Stars to raise his average to .327. He finished the year batting .323 in 103 games (70 hits in 217 plate appearance).

According Jack McDonald, sports editor of the San Francisco Call-Bulletin, Johnny was complimentary discussing the quality of pitching in the PCL. "The Negro pitchers don't measure up to the Coast League," he explained. "In our league, we'd see a good pitcher about once a week. In the Coast League, I haven't hit against any cripple, yet. You see pretty good pitching most every day."

In 1950, he was traded to the Portland Beavers, batted a re-

Continued on Page 10

Johnny Ritchey: The Jackie Robinson of the PCL Continued from Page 9

spectable .270, but was sent to Vancouver in the Western International League the next year. He led the league with a .346 average in 1951 and hit .343 the following season. Ironically, his manager in Vancouver was flamboyant former Los Angeles Angels shortstop, "Broadway Billy" Schuster, who was infamous throughout the PCL for his outrageous antics. In 1948, Schuster had been a merciless antagonist toward Johnny and now he was his skipper. Although Schuster effusively praised his catcher in newspaper articles, Johnny never trusted the man.

When he retired from the game after nine minor league seasons, including six in the PCL, Ritchey's career batting average was an even .300. The man could hit and, in a different era, would have certainly been a big leaguer.

Johnny never wanted to be pioneer. The pressure of breaking "the color barrier" made him uncomfortable. He didn't want to be judged by the color of his skin, but rather by his abilities on the baseball diamond. He knew that with a bat in his hands, he could prove his worth.

Most players are particular about the lumber they use. I always liked Johnny's old-school approach to baseball bats and hitting. "You can hit with all of them," he said.

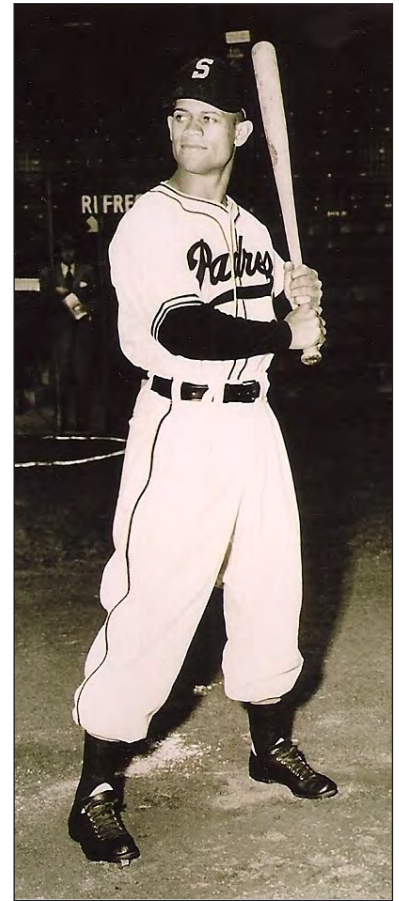
John Ritchey was a family man who neither smoke nor drank. He even married the preacher's daughter. Together with wife, Lydia, they raised three children, Johnna, Tonee and son, Barry. After baseball, Johnny became a milkman. His American Giants teammate, Walter McCoy, recalled how his boyhood friend gave milk to poor families. Walt's explanation was succinct. "Johnny gave it away without hesitation. He said poor kids have to have milk."

Later, he drove a delivery route for Continental Baking and his oldest daughter, Johnna Battle, laughingly reminisced, "We grew up on Twinkies." John and Lydia raised their kids to be tolerant of others, look for good in people and enjoy free day-old Twinkies?

A bust of Johnny Ritchey has been on display at Petco Park, home of the Padres, since 2005. The Ted Williams SABR chapter selected him for the PCL Padres Hall of Fame in 2005 and, in 2017, he was elected to the Breitbard Hall of Fame for San Diego's greatest athletes.

Unfortunately, these accolades came after his death in 2003, but daughters Johnna and Tonee agree on the greatest honor for their father.

Proudly, they both say, "He was our Pop."



Johnny Ritchey, San Diego Padres

In Memory of Faye Weiss By Mark Macrae

Florence "Faye" Weiss passed away peacefully at the age of 93 on January 26, 2018 at Stanford Hospital in Palo Alto.

The widow of longtime PCL publicist, statistician, and historian; Faye worked side by side with her late husband Bill for more than fifty years. Bill was inducted into the PCL Hall of Fame in 2006 and passed away in 2011.

Although the couple had no children, they shared three passions; #1) Each other, #2) black cocker spaniels, and #3) baseball. Many of their closest friends would dispute the order of these passions.

Their baseball publication and document library, which re-

quired four semi-trailers to transport, was donated to the San Diego Baseball Research Center in 2014 for future generations of Californians to have access to.

Faye is survived by her brother Ira (Judy) Somerset of Florida, niece Sara Somerset, nephew Joe (Wendy) Somerset, great nephews Matthew and Adam Somerset, great niece Hannah Somerset, all of Massachusetts.



Potpourri Events Calendar By Mark Macrae

24th Annual Dick Dobbins PCL Player and Family Reunion
Saturday, August 18 | Ryan O'Connell Hall, 575 West Estudillo in San Leandro

More details will come out as we get closer to the event, but mark your calendars.

No weddings, vacations, or babysitting duties that weekend!



Welcome to Opening Day 2018 Continued from Page 1

stack of boxes and photos, and saved what turned out to be thousands of Oakland Oaks front office artifacts from the landfill.

A graduate of UC Berkeley, Dick became a teacher at Acalanes High School in Lafayette, California. In 1973, Dick, along with two friends, promoted the first sport collector shows in Northern California at Acalanes High. These shows continued through 1982 and promoted the interest in collecting sports material in general, with a heavy emphasis on the Pacific Coast League. As an orator and an educator, there was no greater joy he had than to spread the gospel of the PCL. When one left from a conversation with Dick, they left a believer.

Dick continued to enthusiastically share his interest in the

Pacific Coast League through numerous exhibits and two books (Nuggets on the Diamond and Grand Minor League). The latter was actually published posthumously. He also organized a number of Pacific Coast League players reunions in Northern California. The annual ballplayer reunion was renamed the "Dick Dobbins PCL Player Reunion" shortly after Dick passed away on January 3, 1999.

The majority of his Pacific Coast League collection was donated to the California Historical Society in San Francisco. This generosity will allow future generations of Californians to share in Dick's enthusiasm. Congratulations to both of these men. Their contributions to the Pacific Coast League and its history are immeasurable.

In Memory of Lil Arnerich By Mark Macrae

Anthony "Lil" Arnerich, who played for the Oakland Oaks in 1949 and 1950, passed away at his home in Alameda, California on March 9, 2018. Lil was a regular attendee of the Northern California PCL reunions for more than twenty years. Although Lil only appeared in ten regulation games for the Oaks, amidst a four year professional career, his contribution to youth



Lil giving a presentation at the PCL Players Reunion in San Leandro



Lil sharing a story with fellow PCL alumni Dave Turnbull

sports in his beloved Alameda spanned decades.

A native of Oakland, Lil lived in Alameda for nearly 70 years. Shortly after he left professional baseball, Lil went to work for Alameda Recreation and Park Department and

by 1953 was the supervisor of athletics. He worked there for 36 years. He later became involved in Alameda politics serving on the City Council and later vice mayor. Several years ago, the upper field at Washington Park was renamed "Lil Arnerich Field" in his honor, but Lil insisted the field be renamed "Arnerich Field" as other members of his family had played and served there.

Anyone who talked with Lil at the reunions, or elsewhere can remember his 'always positive' attitude and dedication to the quality of life in Alameda. The city lost one of its greatest ambassadors on March 9th. Below is a link to an presentation that Lil made at the 2015 PCL Reunion. It runs about 5 minutes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r1N4vN5dQio>



Lil in classic form, just before he joined the PCL
Courtesy Alameda's Sandlot Blog

Epilogue By Mark Macrae

Another baseball season is upon us. We hope that you are able to get out to a game or two (or twenty) this year.

Most of the Pacific Coast League franchises have special promotions throughout the year, ranging from bobble head giveaways to fireworks, so check their websites early before the best seats are gone.

Our next edition will be out in July. We look forward to your feedback and encourage your participation.





Pacific Coast League

POTPOURRI

JULY 2018

PACIFIC COAST LEAGUE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

VOL. 32, NO. 3

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Director

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- Umpire Carlucci Remembers O'Doul by Zak Ford
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- PCL Reunion Order Form
- New Sicks' Stadium Sign By Tim Jenkins

* Events

And Then There Was One *By Mark Macrae*

The longest running series of Pacific Coast League baseball cards, commonly referred to as "ZEENUTS" were released annually from 1911 through 1938. They were produced by the Collins McCarthy (later Collins Hencke, Collins Hencke & Stone, and Collins) Candy Company of San Francisco. The cards were inserted (one at a time) into one, of several, of their candy boxes including Ruf Neks, Home Run Kisses and Zeenuts. If you count printing variations around 4000 different are currently known to exist.

Over the years the series would depict nearly 1,450 different players, roughly 60% of whom would have Major League Experience. In addition, there are quite a few players depicted that NEVER played in a regulation PCL game. Still others were labeled with the wrong team or their name was misspelled. Identifying these players has proven to be challenging, and this ongoing project has been going on for decades.

One of the first individuals to work on this project was Charles "Buck" Barker. Initially it may seem unusual that a man who lived most of his life in or around St Louis would have enough interest in the Pacific Coast League to spend thousands of hours, and more than a decade trying to identify the thousand plus players depicted in the series. But those who knew Barker would understand his passion.

Barker was born in 1911 and started collecting baseball cards in 1922. Barker's interest in baseball and baseball cards would continue until his death in 1982. By the 1950's his collection was filled in significantly but he realized that many of his cards featured only the last names of the players and he had no idea who most of these players were. So where would somebody go in the 1950's to research the background of these players. There was no internet, no fax machines, no SABR, and Cooperstown

was almost a thousand miles away from St Louis. Wait a minute, could there be a source closer to home? One that had been around since the 1880's? One that had an enormous baseball archive? ... Enter THE SPORTING NEWS.

By the late 1950's, Barker developed a good relationship with key people at THE SPORTING NEWS and was granted unprecedented access to their archive. As many of you know there are typically many restrictions imposed on researchers when reviewing an archive. Some of these restrictions include limitations to one pencil, one notebook, no bags, time allotments, supervised visits, etc. You can understand why these restrictions exist, but it does expand the amount of time required for any project.

Barker meticulously scoured the archives and identified hundreds of otherwise unknown or obscure players from many of the sets of baseball cards that he collected. Initially, he focused on the major league sets and players, but he gradually expanded into sets which included minor league players. Due to the overwhelming amount of players depicted, he saved the Zeenut series for his last project.

Sometime in the late 1960's, Barker started into the Zeenut project. Working year by year, team by team he chipped away at the player identities. Soon there were 500 different players, then a thousand. By the early 1970's Barker had



Continued on Page 9

1947 Seals' Spring Training Adventures in Hana, Maui

By Joye Ogradowski

Bob Stevens, sports writer for the San Francisco Chronicle, waxed poetic when describing the Seals baseball team's historic flight to Maui for spring training in 1947. "They'll spend today roaming around the house kissing their kids and hugging their wives, and maybe even water the lawn a few times to expel nervous energy stored in anticipation of the 2440-mile Pacific flight and experiences that await them in the storied village of Hana on the jungle-fringed rim of the island of Maui."

Players gathered at Seals Stadium on the evening of February 17, rode in limousines to Oakland Airport, and took flight silently into the night at 10:54pm. Headwinds willing, they would arrive in the islands at around 7:30 the next morning.

In addition to the four scribes making the trip - Bucky Walter, James K. McGee, Bob Stevens, and Jack McDonald - the first group of players included: Trainer Leo Hughes, pitchers Bob Joyce, Bob Chesnes, Vern Kahout, Floyd Erhmann, Jack Brewer, Ray Harrell, Bob Jensen, Al Lien, Cliff Melton, Emmett O'Neill, Larry Powell, Robert Drilling, Francis Rosso, Frank Seward, Manny Vargas, and Bill Werle, and catchers Bruce Ogradowski, Joe Sprinz, Doug Loane, Will Leonard, and Jack Holt. The remainder of the squad, including outfielders and infielders and pitcher Dale Matthewson, who was still recovering from a recent operation, would leave the night of February 24.

At the time, the Matson DC-4 carrying the players to the Hawaiian Paradise was the newest airplane in the fleet, a "queen of the skies;" luxurious beyond imagination, making it's first direct commercial passenger flight from Oakland to Puenene, Maui, (pronounced 'Puunene,' as Stevens pointed out.)

Most of the players were new to air travel, and feelings were mixed. While pitcher Bob Joyce, winner of 31 games in 1946, sheepishly wanted to know how much flight insurance would cost, catcher Bruce Ogradowski enthusiastically yelped, "Oh boy!" as they boarded the plane.

Fear was realized when, mid-way across the Pacific Ocean, the number one, or outboard, engine on the port side of the



Catcher Bruce Ogradowski interacting with local kids in Heavenly Hana.

plane broke an oil line and "gave up the ghost 504 miles at sea." Captain Herbert Jones, however, eased the nervous players' minds, sort of, by explaining that the four-engine plane could fly just fine using only three of them. Closing in on the islands, Flight 141 detoured to John Rodgers Field in Honolulu for repairs, and passengers were divided between a C-47 and a tiny Beechcraft to complete the remainder of the air journey.

Then there was the Road to Hana, affectionately referred to as the Highway to Heaven - 52 miles of rough dirt road that claimed 620 hairpin curves, and 59 unforgiving one-lane bridges. The boys boarded the Hana Bus Line, two buses shipped over from the mainland by co-owner Paul I. Fagan, but some of them didn't hold up well to this leg of the journey either, with pitcher Frank Rosso fearing for his life.

The Seals finally arrived in the tiny village of Hana that "disappeared on one side into a primitive jungle, and on the other into the glistening sands and softly rolling surge of a Pacific Ocean beach."

The team was housed in Fagan's Hana Ranch Hotel, the first grand inn built outside of Honolulu in the islands. After

Continued on Page 3



Hana Park, Hana, Maui 1947



1947 Seals' Spring Training Adventures in Hana, Maui *Continued from Page 2*



the war, sugar was deemed too expensive to grow in the area, and plantations were closing. This gave Fagan the opportunity in 1944 to purchase 14,000 acres of then unused land in Hana, had his cattle shipped in from Molokai, and Hana Ranch was born. He then built the Hotel Hana Ranch. The rest is history.

The players would work out in the shadow of Ka'uiki Head Cinder Cone Volcano from 9am-noon. After that there was

horseback riding, swimming, tennis, ping pong, pool, and hiking.

Spring training hit its first snag though, almost immediately upon the team's arrival. On February 19, it was discovered that "somebody sabotaged the installation of the pitching rubber, adding a foot where a foot shouldn't be, and forcing a construction remake." During the process of building the field, home plate was embedded in lava 61 feet from the rubber, which was in excess by six inches. "The first pitcher to ascend the hill, Al Lien, cast one ball, raised questioning eyebrows to the skies of Maui and groaned: "I've lost my stuff. It took 20 minutes for that pitch to reach the plate." Manager Lefty O'Doul watched, procured a measuring tape, and then yelled for help. The situation was quickly corrected, and Al was a happy guy.

All spring training teams suffer illness and injury, and Roy Nicely was no different. Roy, the man with the upset opu (tummy), rejoined the Seals after a brief stay in a local hospital with ulcer issues. He worked out with the club on the hard surface of Honolulu Stadium, the same turf which gave leg miseries to most of the boys in 1946. Skipper O'Doul, after watching Roy limp around the field, gave him the "c'mere" stare and said: "Go to Leo Hughes (the trainer) get yourself a box full of epsom salts, load the bath tub with real hot water, pour the salts into it, and soak to your heart's content. It'll do you good."

"Ok," said Nicely. "I get the salts from Leo, pour them into the tub, climb in and soak. Right?"

"Right!" was the answer.

"But I can't, Frank," pleaded Nicely.

"You can't? Waddaya mean, you can't? Get the salts. Leo has barrels full of it. Take it back to the hotel, run that hot water and crawl in."

"I'd love to," groaned Roy. "My legs do ache. Believe me.

I know I can get the salts. I know I can take them back to the hotel. But, Frank, I can't soak."

"Can't soak?"

"Can't soak, skipper. There ain't no bath tub in my room!"

Unrelated baseball injuries included a near drowning and the loss of teeth at the beach. On manager Lefty O'Doul's 50th birthday, players and reporters headed to Hamoa Beach, just down the road from Hana, after a long day of workouts. Chronicle sports reporter Bucky Walter was about 75 yards offshore when he started screaming for help. Lefty came to the rescue. Bucky, going under, placed a death grip on O'Doul, and they both went down. An experienced swimmer, O'Doul managed to brake the grip and bring the reporter to the surface. Bucky was given first aid treatment on the beach, and was swimming again a few days later.

Bucky also had a set of teeth knocked out by a wave, so when catcher Oggie Ogradowski decided to go swimming... rather, wading...he was determined to protect himself against such a tragedy. "He yanked the fangs out of his mouth," (he lost his front teeth playing football in high school), buried them in the sand, placed an identifying rock on top of them, and then drew arrows pointing to his "molar mine." He stepped back to admire his handiwork, then crrrrunch. He inadvertently stepped on the rock." As Stevens so bluntly put it, "Not too coherent at best, Ambrose Ogradowski, the pudgy Seal catcher, right now is completely unintelligible. He has to gum his food and talk through a void once protected by a flashing set of store-bought teeth."

In between events beyond anyone's control, the Seals split squads - the Del Young Yannigans and the Joe Sprinz Slickers - managed full training workouts before playing "official" games against local teams, including the Plantation All-Stars. The highlight of the spring involved playing the New York Giants five times at Honolulu Stadium and five times at Seals Stadium. They were hard-fought battles, but the Giants won the extended series 5-3 (rainouts not counted.)

During the third inning of the Seals' second consecutive defeat of the Giants, 11-9, manager O'Doul was coaching third base. A ball off the bat of Ogradowski caught him on the top of the head. He never fell over, but he hadn't had time to duck either. The stadium was deathly silent until O'Doul started dancing and shadow boxing with Giant third baseman Bobby Thompson, and waving his arms to the crowd. A few minutes later, however, he left the coaching box and went to the ticket office, where Dr. Clarence E. Fronk was summoned from the stands. After a brief examination, O'Doul was whisked off to Queens Hospital, where X-rays revealed no fracture, just a huge bump and comparable headache.

Manuel "Nay" Hernandez...The Ultimate Sacrifice *By Bill Swank*

In 1944, Manuel "Nay" Hernandez's dream to play for his hometown San Diego Padres came true. His brothers had gone off to war, but because of a heart murmur, the local draft board classified him as 4F which meant he was "physically unfit for military service."

It was not easy for baseball teams to fill their rosters in 1944. Joe Nuxhall was only 15-years-old when he pitched for the Cincinnati Reds that season.

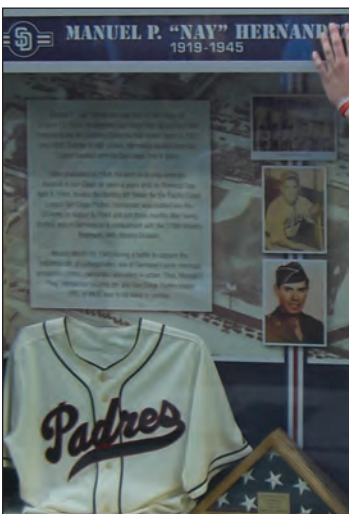
The St. Louis Browns won their only American League title in 1944. The average age of their starting lineup was over 30 years of age and they had 13 players with 4F classifications.

The average age of Padre starters in 1944 was 30. Their shortstop Hank Sciarra was 16.

Hernandez was found playing in a local wartime industrial league. He was 24 when manager George Detore placed the hustling left fielder in the starting lineup for Opening Day in 1944. He went one-for-two and scored a run in the Padres 8-5 victory over the visiting Oakland Oaks.

Playing for San Diego High School in 1937 and 1938, Nay was twice selected to the All-Southern California baseball team.

"Manuel Hernandez was an outstanding member of the San Diego High School baseball team," said legendary coach Mike "Turkey Neck" Morrow. "He was a fine boy to work with and very popular with his teammates. He hit in the clean-up position for us, which indicated a heavy hitter, and was directly responsible for many of our victories."



Manuel "Nay" Hernandez display case (photo by Bill Swank)



Manuel "Nay" Hernandez, 1944 San Diego Padres outfielder

Nay was an outstanding defensive outfielder, but he struggled against Coast League pitching and his average dropped to .207 in 30 games. All professional baseball games were cancelled on "D-Day," June 6, 1944, when Allies forces stormed the beaches at Normandy. When the Padres resumed play, Hernandez was no longer with the club. Teammates wondered what happened to the quiet flyhawk, but baseball is a game where players come and go. He had told them nothing.

Over 50 years later, the public learned the rest of the

"Nay" Hernandez story. A young woman named Tara Macauley was trying to find her father, but the only clue she had for a possible connection was that his father had played for the San Diego Padres. She contacted the Padres, but they had no records from the PCL era. Tara was referred to me and based on the minimal information she was able to provide, I found her father and helped facilitate a reunion with the paternal side of her family.

In 1944, when the San Diego Draft Board realized Manuel Hernandez was playing professional baseball, they decided that if he was able to swing a bat, he could also carry a rifle. He was drafted into the army and shipped out for Europe to join the 94th Infantry Division. Following the Battle of the Bulge and the coldest winter in years, the 94th - known as "Patton's Nugget" - crossed into Germany and engaged in fierce combat.

In a letter to his family, Nay wrote, "We are pretty dam busy and we are moving so dam fast I haven't had much time to write. We've been taking town after town."

In March 1945, his regiment entered the German industrial city of Ludwigshafen and encountered heavy resistance. Private Manuel Hernandez was killed by enemy fire on March 24, 1945. A week later, his unit was taken off the front lines and, less than two months after Hernandez died, on May 8, 1945, Germany surrendered unconditionally.

I invited Kevin Kernan, a sportswriter, to Tara's 1996 reunification with her father, Manuel "Baby Nay" Hernandez, Jr.. On Memorial Day, his front page story appeared in The San Diego Union-Tribune and a month later, 72-year-old Tina Hernandez threw out the first pitch to honor her brother at a Padres game. There were five boys and ten girls in the Hernandez family. All of them played baseball.

With the concentrated presence of the Navy and Marine Corps in San Diego, the Padres proudly promote themselves as "the team for the military." In June 2010, they honored Manuel Hernandez, who is the only Padres player to have made the ultimate sacrifice for his country. A case containing a replica of his Padres uniform, a folded American flag and photographs is on display in the "military zone" beneath the right field stands at Petco Park.

The irony of this story is that the love of baseball led to this young man's death. If Manuel Hernandez had not fulfilled his dream to play professional ball for his hometown Padres, the local draft board never would not have reclassified him as fit for military service.



Manuel "Baby Nay" and Tina Hernandez accept American flag from the Padres

The Passing of Chuck Stevens

By Mark Macrae

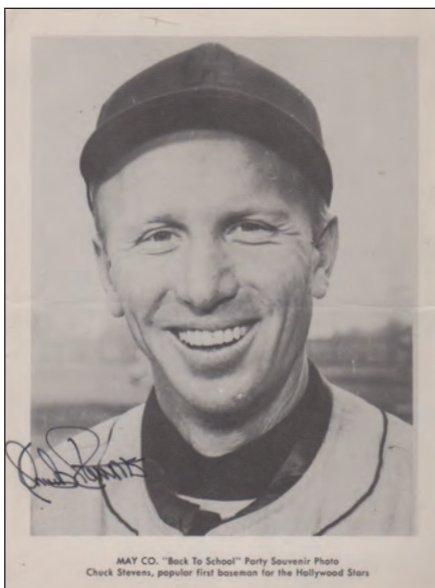
Baseball lost one of its greatest ambassadors on May 28th, 2018. Chuck Stevens passed away, 43 days shy of his 100th birthday. At the time of his death he was the oldest living ex- Major Leaguer.

Chuck was born July 10, 1918 in Van Houten, New Mexico. Within a few years the Stevens family moved to Long Beach, California. Chuck played both basketball and baseball as a youth, but also followed the Pacific Coast League Angels. Following his graduation from Long Beach's Poly High School in 1937, Chuck entered pro ball with the Williamston Martins (Class D Coastal Plains League) in North Carolina. The next few seasons Chuck mostly played in the lower minors, but did play with Toledo in the American Association and the St Louis Browns in 1941.

Like many players of his era, service during World War interrupted his playing career. He spent three years in the Army Air Force, specializing in crash and burn recovery, saving both men and supplies in downed aircraft. He later spent nine seasons in the PCL with Hollywood, San Francisco and Sacramento during an eighteen year career. His favorite years were with the Hollywood Stars, as the team won three pennants during his stay

Stevens also appeared in two baseball themed movies, THE STRATTON STORY (Jimmy Stewart and June Allyson) and THE WINNING TEAM (Ronald Reagan and Doris Day)

In 1960, Chuck became secretary-treasurer of the Association of Professional Ball Players of America, a position he would hold for 38 years, helping to improve the lives of thousands of ballplayers. Chuck continued to stay involved with baseball events, including the Southern California PCL Player reunions. His baseball friends honored him with a lunch in February in Long Beach. Chuck will be missed by his thousands of baseball friends.



PCL Encyclopedia Updates

By Mark Macrae

Contributors to this issue include Carlos Bauer, Eddie Hurt, Barry McMahon, Bill Shubb

- 1) Charles Griffith "Toby" Fullerton (1911 Portland), Born September 16, 1888 in Freeport Pennsylvania...Died March 9, 1977 in Freeport Pennsylvania ; Bats-Both, Throws-R
- 2) Mutt McGinty, 1-AB, 0-H
- 3) Chition, Los Angeles 1910 is Frank Richard Chilton, Born March 30, 1889 Chicago, IL.... Died September 4, 1949 Roseville, Ca (Buried in Sacramento)
- 4) Albert Lewis Honeck (Portland 1920) born January 13, 1896 Rochester, NY ... died August 17, 1978 Michigan....H-5'7", W-150, B-R
- 5) Danny Wright (1910 Sacramento).... Daniel Elmer Wright, use name "Dannie", Born July 19, 1889 Rocklin, Ca....Died January 14, 1959 Sacramento, Ca... Throws-Left
- 6) Carl Scheib died on March 24, 2018 in San Antonio, Tx
- 7) (NEW PLAYER) Fred J. Matley, Born 1886 in Lime Creek, Iowa, Died April 16, 1915 in Lodi, Ca. Played for Seals in October 1910. Bats-L, Throws-R. Note that obituary spells his name with two 't's
- 8) Deal (1911 Los Angeles) is Howard Deal, Throws-L, Bats-L
- 9) D.H. McLeod (1911 Sacramento), H-6'0", W-200
- 10) Eddie Samcoff died March 29, 2018 in Fair Oaks, Ca
- 11) Roy Wright (1959 Phoenix Giants) died 5-5-2018 in Chickamauga, Georgia
- 12) Frederick A. "Fred" Carman, former Seals player...Born August 2, 1884 Willows, Ca... Died August 3, 1961 Susanville, Ca
- 13) Ed Griffin (Seals 1908-1910) was born in Flemington, New Jersey in 1882. Died on January 23, 1959 in Pacific Grove, Ca.. Picked up the nickname "Tex" because he pitched in Texas just prior to signing with the Seals.
- 14) Henry Melchior was born in New York City, NY
- 15) Harry Fielder was born in Carlotta, California... Given name was Henry
- 16) Ray Barker (Vancouver 1958-1960, and Portland 1964) died on May 29th, 2018
- 17) Chuck Stevens died on May 28, 2018 in Long Beach, California. An expanded obituary is located inside this issue.

Oral History:

O'Doul's Return to San Francisco Remembered by Umpire Carlucci

Compiled By Zak Ford

In 1952, Lefty O'Doul, long-time San Francisco Seals manager, returned to San Francisco as the manager of the San Diego Padres. Ever the showman, O'Doul made his Seals Stadium return memorable, especially for Cece Carlucci, the home plate umpire during his first game back.

Carlucci shared his story of O'Doul's return many years later as a panelist at a PCL reunion.

"It was a Tuesday night, we had seven games that week, and I kicked Lefty out on his night. You've got to be a dumb umpire to do that. I made headlines for a week!

They came out with a rule that year that no manager or coach could leave the coaching box or dugout and come to home plate to dispute a ball or strike call. The batter or catcher could say something and within reason, you'd listen to him.

We go into San Francisco and they throw a night for O'Doul. It was his first visit back to San Francisco as an opponent, but the fans still loved him. He must have received a hundred gifts and kisses from the women.

I'm back behind the plate, it's about the fifth inning, and it's 0-0. Guy Fletcher throws one in and I holler, 'Ball!' He comes half way off the mound. I meet him there and he says, 'God damn it! I'm having trouble out here and you're having trouble!' It's 0-0, nobody's having much trouble. I say, 'You get back to pitching and I'll get back to doing my job.' I go back and Frank Kerr, the catcher, says, 'Lay off my pitcher, you're getting him excited.' I say, 'Look, that new rule says if your manager comes out here and says a word, it will be automatic. Keep your manager in the ballgame.' He kept arguing, turning around, and

putting on a show.

I see Lefty leaving the dugout. I'm thinking, 'Holy cow! If he comes to home plate, I'll have to knock him! I'll meet him before he comes to home plate and let him stay in the ballgame.' I meet him halfway and damn it, he went right around me to home plate. Now, I'm looking over there about 30 or 40 feet away, and he's talking to the catcher. That's my home, I've got to get there. I think, 'Gee, I don't want to go there, but I have to. I've got to run the ballgame.' I know when I get there, something's going to happen.

Sure enough, I walk up, and he says, 'Kid, so you've kicked one in the clutch.' I say, 'Lefty, I gave you every break in the book. I met you half way to let you stay in the game. I'm sorry, now you've got to leave.' The next day, headlines read, 'Everyone loves Lefty but Carlucci!'

The next night, Lefty comes to me with a box of chocolates. I'm working third base but have two more games behind the dish that week. He says, 'Cece, have a piece of candy.' I say, 'Bull crap! I'm not eating your candy. I don't know what you've got in that candy, ex-lax or what. I kicked you out. I'm sure you don't like me.' He says, 'I put on a show last night. You were right. Come on.' I say, 'Okay. You eat a piece first, then I'll grab one.' While he's doing this, he's waving his hands and the fans are thinking, 'That a boy, Lefty! Get on him!' We're talking about candy and they think he's on me."



Lefty O'Doul



Cece Carlucci - PCL umpire from 1950-1961

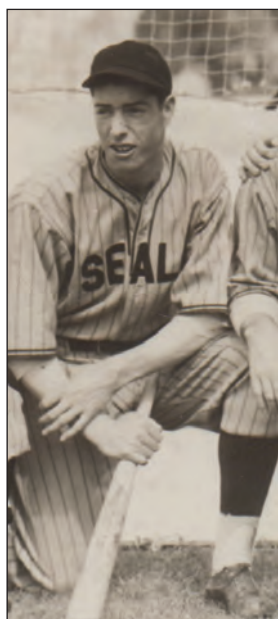


*Padres Manager Lefty O'Doul
1952-1954*

“California at Bat: America’s Pastime in the Golden State”

By Alan O'Connor

“California at Bat: America’s Pastime in the Golden State” chronicles the state’s history of baseball from the Gold Rush to the modern era, revealing its legacy of all-stars and the contributions of women, African American, Latino and other players who broke barriers to expand the sport’s enduring appeal. Curated and produced by the California Museum, this all-new exhibit features over 200 rarely-seen, Cooperstown-worthy artifacts and photographs. Highlights include uniforms, equipment and ephemera from historic games played by Jackie Robinson, Joe DiMaggio, Ted Williams, Willie Mays, Sandy Koufax, Rickey Henderson, Dusty Baker, Tony Gwynn and others. In addition, objects from Pacific Coast



Joe DiMaggio 1932-1935

League teams and from Edmonds Field, home of the Sacramento Solons until 1960, recall the years before Major League Baseball arrived in California. The exhibit runs from July 29 through December 30, 2018.

“California At Bat” Home Opener

Members of the public are invited to celebrate the opening of “California at Bat: America’s Pastime in the Golden State” with an afternoon of fun for all ages on Sun., July 29 from 12:00 to 4:00 p.m. Festivities include \$5 reduced general admission; presentations and book signings by historians, collectors and authors Stephen Wong and Alan O’Connor; Home Run Challenge and Speed Pitch games; baseball card evaluation booth; hands-on activities for kids; concessions stand-themed refreshments and food truck fare for sale; and more fun for all ages.

For details, visit:

<http://www.californiamuseum.org/home-opener>.

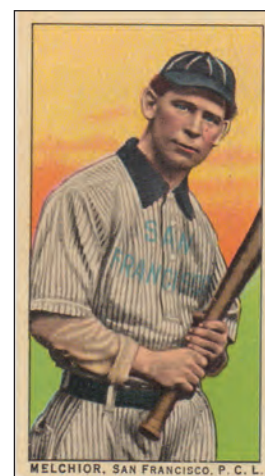
Contributors to the exhibit include PCLHS and SABR members: Tom Crisp, Richard Macaluso, Mark Macrae, Dwight Martinia, Doug McWilliams, the Raimondi Family and Alan O’Connor.

The 1910 PCL Season

By Carlos Bauer

Carlos Bauer has just finished reviewing the box scores from the 1910 PCL season, and found that Hank Perry won the batting title. The stats issued by the league had Shaw hitting .281 and Perry hitting .279, with Gus Fisher at .266. In all, he found the “officials” to be way off.

Player	T	G	AB	R	H	1B	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	Avg
Hank Perry	Sac	190	695	77	199	146	35	9	9	86	33	.286
Gus Fisher	Port	165	538	66	149	103	32	9	5	64	13	.277
Hunky Shaw	SF	155	521	56	142	115	17	8	2	51	25	.273
Babe Danzig	Sac	145	542	43	147	110	29	5	3	56	16	.271
Henry Melchior	SF	194	690	66	185	152	27	5	1	62	31	.268






The 24th Annual
Northern California Dick Dobbins

PCL PLAYER & FAMILY REUNION




Saturday August 18, 2018 • 9:30am - 3:00pm



DON'T MISS THIS FAST-PACED FUN-FILLED EVENT!

*The day's events will include an informal morning social time,
a catered lunch, and an afternoon program.*



LOCATION

Ryan O'Connell Hall (Part of St Leanders Church) • **575 West Estudillo Avenue, San Leandro**
Corner of San Leandro Boulevard - Directly Across the Street from the San Leandro BART Station

ADMISSION

With Lunch: Members/Non-Members • \$29 **Without Lunch:** Members • \$4 • Non-Members • \$8

*Members of PCLHS, SABR, Friends of Marino Pieretti and the San Francisco Oldtimers are entitled to the lower rate for admission (if they do not purchase the lunch).

PLEASE RSVP BY AUGUST 13, 2018

Name _____ E-Mail _____

Number of Guests _____ Amt. of Check _____

Please Reserve Your Luncheon by Returning this Form With Your Check

Payable to Mark Macrae and Mail to: PCLHS • PO Box 2111 • Castro Valley, CA 94546

DIRECTIONS

From San Francisco

Bay Bridge to Interstate 880. Follow 880 South to Davis Street (3 exits south of the Coliseum). Exit Davis Street East towards downtown and stay on Davis for approx. 1 mile to San Leandro Boulevard. Continue past San Leandro Boulevard for 1 block to Carpentier (The sign is missing). Turn right on Carpentier and stay on Carpentier for 1 block to West Estudillo. Turn right on West Estudillo and then turn left into the parking lot. The hall is on the corner of San Leandro Boulevard and West Estudillo.

From San Jose

Follow I-880 North to Davis Street in San Leandro (3 Exits past the I-238/I-580 cutoff). Exit Davis Street East towards downtown and stay on Davis for approx. 1 mile to San Leandro Boulevard. Continue past San Leandro Boulevard for 1 block to Carpentier (The sign is missing). Turn right on Carpentier and stay on Carpentier for 1 block to West Estudillo. Turn right on West Estudillo and then turn left into the parking lot. The hall is on the corner of San Leandro Boulevard and West Estudillo.

From the Peninsula Via Dumbarton or San Mateo Bridge

Take either bridge East to Interstate 880. Follow I-880 North to Davis Street in San Leandro (3 Exits past the I-238/I-580 cutoff). Exit Davis Street East towards downtown and stay on Davis for approx. 1 mile to San Leandro Boulevard. Continue past San Leandro Boulevard for 1 block to Carpentier (The sign is missing). Turn right on Carpentier and stay on Carpentier for 1 block to West Estudillo. Turn right on West Estudillo and then turn left into the parking lot. The hall is on the corner of San Leandro Boulevard and West Estudillo.

Interstate 80 West to Berkeley Maze. Try to position yourself in the Number 3 lane. Follow 880 South to Davis Street (3 exits south of the Coliseum). Exit Davis Street East towards downtown and stay on Davis for approx. 1 mile to San Leandro Boulevard. Continue past San Leandro Boulevard for 1 block to Carpentier (The sign is missing). Turn right on Carpentier and stay on Carpentier for 1 block to West Estudillo. Turn right on West Estudillo and then turn left into the parking lot. The hall is on the corner of San Leandro Boulevard and West Estudillo.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: MARK MACRAE • 510.538.6245 • MARK_MACRAE@COMCAST.NET

New Sicks' Seattle Stadium Sign *By Tim Jenkins*

The Pacific Northwest chapter of the Society for American Baseball Research (NWSABR) is moving forward with a plan to replace the deteriorated sign that marks the location of Sicks' Seattle Stadium. The current sign — erected in the early 1990s — stands near the intersection of S. McClelland St. and Rainier Ave. S., adjacent to a Lowe's Home Improvement Center, which now occupies the site. NWSABR's intent is to not only mark the location of the former baseball palace, but to highlight the history and transport the public back to the "golden age" of the Pacific Coast League.

The retro-design of the proposed sign is the main link to the storied history of the site. We have commissioned an artist to render a design that will closely mimic the marquee sign that once stood along Rainier Ave. S. The new sign will be smaller in scale than the original, but will be placed in approximately the same location. A former bus stop concrete pad provides an ideal spot to erect the commemorative marker.



In addition to the retro sign, we hope to include interpretive signage explaining the significance of the site. We hope to tell the story of Dugdale Park 2, which preceded Sicks' Stadium on the site, and detail the rich history of the

Rainiers. Of course, the tragic saga of the one-and-done MLB Seattle Pilots will be highlighted, as well. Additionally, we will mention that Sicks' hosted a world heavyweight championship fight, Negro League baseball, concerts by Elvis Presley, Jimi Hendrix, the Doors and many other events.

The property owner is very supportive and excited about the project. He has even suggested painting a mural on the building wall. All the signage will be placed on private property, and fortunately, the City of Seattle is cooperative and has not raised any issues with the proposed plan.

Once fundraising begins, we will use the National SABR office to facilitate all financial transactions. They are very experienced in dealing with this type of a project. As a non-profit organization (501(c)3), any contribution is tax-deductible.

Emil Sick's art deco classic is but a memory. NWSABR wants to ensure that the memory never fades away.



And Then There Was One *continued from page 1*

reached out to many of his collecting friends, seeking their input for this enormous project. One of these friends was Don McPherson, another lifelong collector. The two of them worked on this project until Barker died in 1982. McPherson continued the research, but identifying the remaining players proved more and more challenging.

Shortly before McPherson's death in 2001, he gifted the research to me. At the time there were approximately three dozen players that remained unidentified. A few years later, Carlos Bauer's CYCLOPEDIA on the PCL was released. This helped with a few more players, primarily those who appeared in less than five PCL games. Over the next fifteen years, a collector or researcher would stumble across one or two players and the list would continue to get whittled away.

With websites such as newspapers.com, the access to information is becoming easier. In April of 2018, collector / researcher Dewey St Germaine exposed a few more players who appeared at Training Camp or tryouts, and the 'list' now stands at one individual.

His name, as it appears on the card, is O'Malia. The team affiliation reads Portland, but a closer look at his cap reveals a "V", so it is likely Vernon. The card was released in 1921 so the photo was probably shot during training camp. Needless to say the focus is on January to March of 1921, and centers around the Portland and Vernon training camps. His name, or one very close to that, has not yet surfaced in any article.

Only time will tell if this last, elusive, player is identified. Until then we stand at one.

Warming Up *By Mark Macrae*

It wasn't just the 101 degree heat that was occurring in Manteca on June 22. A miniature PCL Player gathering, a precursor to the reunion coming up on August 18th took place. Three vehicles from different directions containing Jim Engelhardt and Dave Turnbull from the north, Tom Munoz from the east, and Lou Profumo, Doug McWilliams and myself from the west met for lunch at this central point, a nondescript Black Bear Diner. What happened was a great 2 1/2 hour baseball themed visit which brought up baseball names from Smead Jolley, Ernie Broglio, Bob Murphy, Chuck Dressen, Jigger Statz, Lefty O'Doul and others, from obscure to famous. Ballparks from Sicks Stadium to the Emeryville ballpark to Lane Field and Seals Stadium. In other words it was a small version of the fun times that will happen on August 18th, where 'old' baseball friends will get together and share stories and memories, where new friendships will be formed and strengthened.

Two things that everyone agreed on today. It had been too



Clockwise from left front - Lou Profumo (1963 Hawaii Islanders ST), Jim Engelhardt (1968 Seattle, 1971 Salt Lake), Dave Turnbull (1967 Seattle), Tom Munoz (1952-1955 Oakland), Doug McWilliams (Fan), Mark Macrae (Fan)

long since we last got together, and we'll be doing this more times in the future. Hope to see you on August 18.



Epilogue *By Mark Macrae*



The 24th annual Northern California Pacific Coast League Reunion will be here next month, on Saturday August 18th. A flyer / reservation form is enclosed in this newsletter. We hope to see as many of you as possible making the trek out to San Leandro.

Each year we lose a few guests, but each year we also add a few new attendees.

Sometimes its new players (Last year Al Woods came out for the first time). In other cases the children, grandchildren or great grandchildren of former players come out and mingle with

the families of other ballplayers, learning more about their relatives and establishing new friendships.

For those of you who are unable to attend, we will have some highlights and photos in our October newsletter. Former players that are unable to attend can forward any messages to me to relay to the attendees.

For those interested in the current PCL, the AAA All Star Game will be held on July 11th at Huntington Park in Columbus, Ohio. The best players from the PCL will be competing against the best players in the International League. Have a great summer and we'll be back in October.



Pacific Coast League

POTPPOURRI

OCTOBER 2018

PACIFIC COAST LEAGUE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

VOL. 32, NO. 4

President Emeritus

Dick Beverage

Director

Mark Macrae

Advisory Committee

Dave Eskenazi

Zak Ford

Bob Hoie

Alan O'Connor

Joye Ogrodowski

Ray Saraceni

Bill Swank

Inside This Issue:

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2018 PCLHS Player & Family Reunion *By Mark Macrae*

The 24th Annual Dick Dobbins PCL Player and Family Reunion is now in the record books. A total of 102 people from the PCL Historical Society, SABR, Friends of Marino Pieretti and San Francisco Baseball Oldtimers showed up for a pleasant Saturday in August.

Doug McWilliams was there bright and early and set up nearly 60 feet of exhibit space on the Oakland Oaks, including examples of most of their team photos. The final decade of the Oaks was well represented by player photographs as well as artwork from Tribune cartoonist Lee Susman, and seemed to attract the most interest.

The guests started to arrive well before the 9:30 opener. Early arrivals included former Seals clubhouse attendant, and author Bill Castellanos, Sacramento historian and author Alan O'Connor and Marlene Vogelsang, the Lefty O'Doul SABR chair who greeted guests at the reception desk. PCL alumni was represented by pitcher Ernie Broglio, who has missed very few of our reunions over the years. The El Cerrito native is a great guy to talk with, always sharing an endless supply of stories from his 15 year career. First baseman Tommy Munoz was joined by his two daughters Lisa and Corinne. Tommy has also attended many of these reunions over the years. He grew up less than 1/2 mile from where



TOP ROW (L-R) - Tom O'Doul, Jordan Gonzales, Ron Thomas, Corinne Munoz, Lisa Munoz, Zak Ford, Joye Ogrodowski, Al Woods

MIDDLE ROW (L-R) - Tom Munoz, Nick Cannuli, Ernie Broglio

FRONT ROW (L-R) - Bill Silva, Kurt Lohrke, Bill Raimondi, June Ogden



Dick's son Pete Dobbins with his wife Anne, daughter Christina and son Neil. Dick's daughter Annette is holding the plaque

the reunion was held. His daughters have joined him over the past half-dozen years, learning a lot more about their father's baseball career and antics...

A teammate of Broglio and Munoz with the 1955 Stockton Ports (California League) is also a regular attendee, shortstop Nick Cannuli. Nick is a longtime member of the San Francisco Baseball Oldtimers and the Friends of Marino Pieretti. Although Nick never played in the PCL, his career overlapped many of the PCL alumni.

Attending his second reunion, Oakland native Al Woods visited with many friends throughout the day. Representing the "modern age" of the Pacific Coast League, this left fielder played fifteen years of professional baseball including a season with the Tacoma Twins.

Another very important facet of this reunion are the families of PCL alumni who have supported this function for years. This includes the Raimondi family (Billy, Ernie, Walt, and Al), as well as the families of Jack Lohrke, John Thomas, Bill Rodda, Larry Powell, Lefty O'Doul, Bruce Ogrodowski, Niggie Silva, and many others not able to attend this year.

The socializing in the morning always seems to pass by too quickly. Before we served the lunch, we assembled our 'group' photo, though some eligible alumni and family members manage to stay out of the photo each year.

Continued on page 11

A Father-Son Journey for PCL Interviews *By Zak Ford*

The 1994-95 Major League Baseball strike occurred at a challenging time for me. I was a socially awkward teenager and left without my most comforting escape – baseball.

Like many teenagers, my school studies didn't receive the attention they deserved, and this created tension with my parents, especially my dad. Despite our strained relationship, my dad and I had a common bond. During baseball seasons, we could enjoy a ballgame and escape reality for a few hours. The strike prevented this.

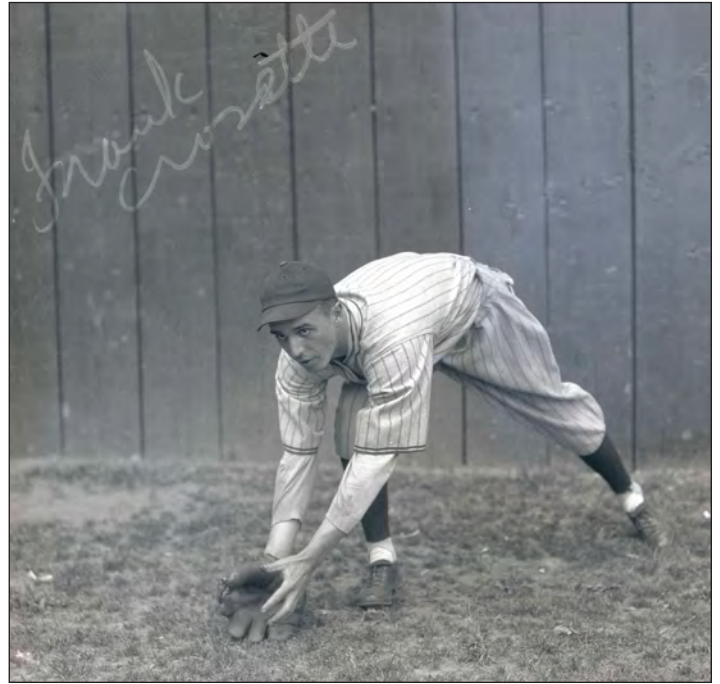
Shortly after the remainder of the 1994 season was cancelled, I turned 16. About this time, I also showed my dad the worst report card of my academic life. To improve school performance, my dad required I obtain a B average before pursuing my driver's license.

While I began my PCL interest the prior year, the strike provided additional interest and the opportunity to expand my research during the fall of 1994. It also provided a unique opportunity to bond with my father.

I had interviewed a few former PCL players prior to baseball's work stoppage, but baseball withdrawals motivated me to expand my list. While simultaneously improving my grades, I spent many weekends using Sacramento's public transit system to visit players at their homes. By Christmas break, I had exhausted my Sacramento contacts. Aware my grades were improving, my dad volunteered to drive me to interviews outside of Sacramento.

I earned a B average the next semester, and in March of 1995 I obtained my driver's license. While the Easter break provided time for player interviews, my limited driving experience did not provide my dad enough comfort for me to drive out of town on my own.

Two weeks before the strike-shortened 1995 Major League Baseball season began, my dad and I shared driving duties for our most memorable journey. We visited Frank Crosetti and Bud Watkins in Stockton. While separated by a generation and very different baseball careers, both men were remarkable



Frank Crosetti | Shortstop-Third Baseman | SF Seals

story tellers.

Crosetti's house was our first destination. It was a modest home, and he had lived there since his playing days. He welcomed us and led us to his baseball room, overflowing with photos and memorabilia from his 37 years with the Yankees. While his time with the San Francisco Seals (1928-1931) initiated our original contact, my dad and I were quickly overtaken by Yankee lore. I noticed a personalized signed photo from his former teammate, Babe Ruth, on the wall. A large photo of him that once graced a wall at the original Yankee Stadium was among the sights. A panoramic photo from the 1932 World Series caught my eye. A unique lamp on his desk incorporated a game used glove and his final major league homerun ball, both bronzed, with a game used bat, topped off with a Yankee Stadium photo lampshade.

Crosetti shared brief stories about his early experiences playing baseball and his short time with the Seals. However, his experiences as a Yankee kept us captivated. Crosetti began his time with the club in 1932, when Babe Ruth was mesmerizing crowds with lofty homeruns and remained with the club as a coach until Mickey Mantle hit his last round tripper. He was part of 17 World Championship teams and 23 World Series participants overall, still a record for any individual.

A highlight of our conversation included his firsthand account of Babe Ruth's "called shot" in the 1932 World Series. "As far as I'm concerned, he didn't point," Crosetti told us. "The Cubs players were razzing Babe. When he was up, he gets one



Frank Crosetti & Zak

Continued on Page 3

A Father-Son Journey for PCL Interviews *Continued from Page 2*

strike on him and looks at the Cubs dugout. They're on him. He gets two strikes. Now they're really on him. Babe steps out of the box. He doesn't point to centerfield. He shakes his finger at the Cubs dugout. He meant, 'I have one strike left.' The next pitch, he hit a homerun. Naturally, the fans and writers are going to say he pointed to centerfield. The next day he was in the dugout and said, 'Well, if the writers want to think I pointed, let them.' He didn't point. I definitely know he didn't point."



BUD WATKINS
SACRAMENTO SOLONS, Pitcher

Shortly after sharing his account of one of baseball's most storied moments, he asked my dad and I for a moment to get something from another room. A few minutes later, he returned and handed an item to me for observation. It was his 1932 World Series ring! The jewelry gave me chills, as he permitted me to slip it onto my finger. The experience provided the perfect ending to our visit and after snapping a few photos, we said our goodbyes.

Watkins' house was a short drive across town. We were welcomed and brought upstairs to his home office, covered with photos from his playing days. Still working as a life insurance agent, Watkins was a generation younger than Crosetti and his nine years as a baseball player were only a small portion of his working career. He spent most of his baseball days in the PCL and never reached the majors. However, his experiences, mixed with his extraordinary story telling skills and larger-than-life personality, kept us equally entertained.

I had met Watkins previously at PCL reunions and we formed an easy bond. While Crosetti's stories included near mythical places and figures I had only read about or seen on television, I felt a closer connection to Watkins' stories. Watkins played many years with the Sacramento Solons, and was friends with many of the area players I had already interviewed, some his former teammates.

Originally from the Midwest and raised both a Cubs and White Sox fan, his family settled in the San Francisco area while he was in high school. He signed with the Sacramento Solons in 1952 and was sent to Stockton for seasoning. During the last

month of the season, he was brought up and joined the Solons in Los Angeles. The trip provided a unique connection to his childhood.

"When I was a kid in Iowa listening to Cubs and White Sox games, one of my favorites was a pitcher by the name of Orval Grove," he told us. "I used to listen to Orval Grove pitch and I had a scrapbook with his picture in it and everything. The first road trip I took with the Solons at the end of '52 was to Los Angeles and we were assigned to our rooms at the hotel. When I got up to the room, sitting on a bed was my roommate, Orval Grove. I didn't sleep that night. I sat there looking at Orval Grove until four in the morning. I couldn't believe I was rooming with my idol!"

Among his tales, Watkins shared his account of winning the last PCL game played at Seals Stadium. However, the honor did not come easily. "I think I was sixth in the league in ERA and I really thought the next year I'd have a contract advantage because being sixth out of 70 some odd pitchers is not bad. That game ruined me because they fooled around," he said with a half-smile. "Joe Gordon pinch-hit for San Francisco and Tommy Heath ran for him. All the outfielders sat down when Gordon came to the plate. It was kind of a joke game, but I got charged with seven runs. I didn't finish sixth, I think I finished eleventh



Zak & Bud Watkins

or twelfth, which took considerable contact talks away for the next year."

After nearly two hours of being entertained by Watkins, we said our goodbyes. Watkins got me in a light headlock, flipped my baseball cap up, and had my dad capture the moment with a photo. My dad and I returned to our car and I handled driving duties for our return home.

More than 23 years have passed since that trip to Stockton. Both Crosetti and Watkins died many years ago. However, my dad and I still often recount the stories they told us. At 40, I am now the same age my dad was that spring day. I also have a teenage son of my own, and the desire to find similar opportunities for father-son bonding.

PCL Managers Fastest to One Hundred Victories *By Dennis Snelling*

On April 14, 2018, Richard “Stubby” Clapp, manager of the Pacific Coast League Memphis Redbirds, picked up his 100th win as a PCL manager with a 3-1 win over the Iowa Cubs. After guiding Memphis to a 91-50 record in 2017, the Redbirds had won nine of their first ten games in 2018, giving Clapp his milestone victory in his 151st PCL game. That raised the question, “Was this a PCL record and, if so, who held the record previously?”

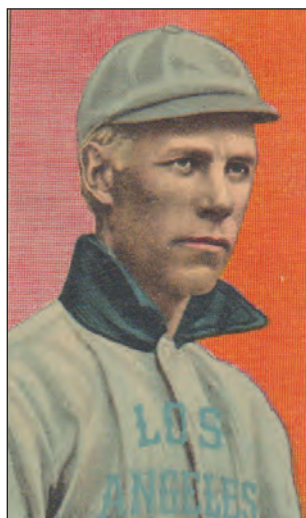
Clapp had indeed set a new record while becoming only the fifth PCL manager to reach 100 victories in less than 160 games. The first to do so was Cap Dillon for the 1903 Los Angeles Angels—some sources list Jim Morley as manager that year, as the



Stubby Clapp

lines between manager and captain as defined at that time were rather blurry. The Angels started the 1903 season with a record of 100-59 on their way to a final mark of 133-78, twenty-seven and a half games better than runner-up Seattle.

That mark was bested by Dots Miller with the 1922 San Francisco Seals. The thirty-five-year-old Miller had been acquired from the Philadelphia Phillies by Seals owner Charlie Graham, who was looking for someone to replace him as bench manager following San Francisco's collapse in the late stages of the 1921 pennant race. The twelve-year big league veteran



Cap Dillon

led the Seals to the PCL title, winning 100 of his first 157 games along the way. Miller was headed for a second straight title in 1923 when he became seriously ill with tuberculosis and died in September, four days shy of his thirty-seventh birthday. Bert Ellison took over and successfully finished what Miller started, giving the Seals consecutive PCL titles.

Miller's record was broken by Earl McNeely—the PCL record that stood until 2018. This was a most surprising dis-



Dots Miller

covery, since McNeely accomplished the feat with Sacramento during the 1932 and 1933 seasons, years when the Senators finished third and fourth.

McNeely had a long connection with Sacramento prior to being named manager in early August 1932 following the resignation of fan-favorite Buddy Ryan, who had been in charge for nine years. McNeely, who did not play baseball in high school because he was considered too small, was Sacramento born and bred—he began his professional career with the PCL Senators in 1922 after starring locally as a semi-pro. Within two years of signing his first professional contract, McNeely was in the majors. Recovering from an injury suffered just prior to joining the Washington Senators, McNeely played well down the stretch of the American League pennant race in 1924, and then drove in the winning run in the twelfth inning of the seventh game of the World Series to give the Senators, and Walter Johnson, their only World Series title.

During his eight big league seasons with Washington and the St. Louis Browns, McNeely continued to live in Sacramento during the off-season, where he tended his orange grove. Returning to Sacramento and the PCL in 1932, McNeely was a popular choice to take over a small-market franchise that had always lacked money, even more so as the Great Depression deepened its hold. Sacramento had recently sold its best player, outfielder Frank Demaree to the Chicago Cubs; his roster spot was partially filled by a pitcher, Kenso Nushida, who became the first Japanese-American to play in the Pacific Coast League and, it was hoped, someone who would prove a drawing card for the significant local Japanese population.

The Senators record stood at 56-69 when McNeely took over, and the team immediately won five straight games and thirteen of fourteen to bring Sacramento within one game of the break-even mark. (Kenso Nushida then lost to Oakland, 2-1, to end the streak.)

Led by pitchers Jimmie DeShong and Ed Bryan, first baseman Dolf Camilli, and outfielders Frenchy Bordagaray and Hank Steinbacher, the Senators went 45-19 under McNeely to end the 1932 season with a record of 101-88 while jumping from sixth place to third.

McNeely and the Senators were off to another hot start in 1933. On July 4, Sacramento boasted a record of 56-36 and sat in first place by four games after sweeping a holiday double



Earl McNeely

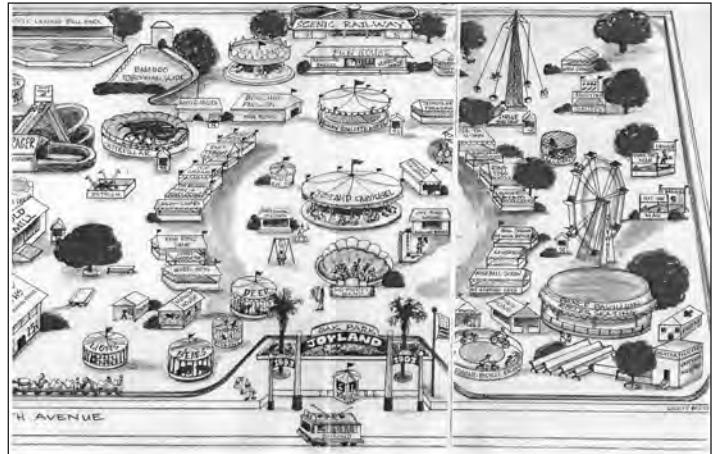
Continued on Page 11

Oak Park *By Alan O'Connor*

The first Pacific Coast League (PCL) baseball game was played on March 26, 1903 between the Oakland Oaks and the Sacramento Senators at Oak Park in Sacramento. The Senators won the game 7-4.

In 1898 Oak Park became Sacramento's third professional baseball park after Agricultural Park (1886-1888) and Snowflake Park (1889-1893). In its day, Oak Park also hosted professional ball games of the Sacramento Gilt Edge and Sacramento Cordovas. Oak Park's final season as Sacramento's PCL ball park was 1909. Interestingly, Oak Park was the "home field" for two games of the PCL Tacoma Tigers in 1904 and three games of the Oakland Oaks in 1905.

Oak Park was part of a large privately owned complex called Oak Park Recreation Grounds (also called Joyland) which



1980s Artist Conception of Oak Park Recreation Grounds

opened in 1897 at 5th Avenue and 33rd Street on the outskirts of Sacramento. While "out of town", Oak Park was an easy trolley or carriage ride from central Sacramento. The complex featured: animal displays including lions, bears, monkeys and ostriches; public baths; amusement rides including a roller coaster, a ferris wheel and carousel; a velodrome for bicycle racing; a theater; a bowling alley; a dancehall; and food venues.

Oak Park Recreation Grounds operated until 1927 when the amusement venues were shut down and it became McClatchy Park (part of Sacramento's city park system). Today the baseball field is in the same location and many of the houses that were seen over the outfield fences over 100 years ago are still there.



The Sacramento Cordovas, led by Charlie Graham, take on Hal Chase and the San Jose Prune Pickers at Oak Park in 1906.

Lefty O'Doul's Has Reopened! *By Mark Macrae*

LEFTY O'DOUL's restaurant has reopened! Lefty's Ballpark Cafe & Dugout Store is now open at 145 Jefferson Street in San Francisco. The popular restaurant closed in early 2017 after a dispute with the landlord. The new location is at Fisherman's Wharf. It's great to see a San Francisco tradition continue.



Ted Williams - A Celebration of His 100th Birthday *By Bill Swank*

Teddy Williams was born on August 30, 1918 in San Diego, California and, one hundred years later, on August 30, 2018, Mayor Kevin Faulconer proclaimed the date as "Ted Williams Day." But, was August 30, 1918 really Theodore's birthday?

A typewritten Standard Certificate of Birth was filed with the San Diego County Registrar on September 4, 1918 with two significant changes entered by pen. Teddy was scratched out and became Theodore. The "20" typed above day was changed to "30." Especially perplexing is the date signed by the delivering physician J.M. Steade: August 21, 1918.

Nothing about Ted Williams is as it seems...

Two tributes were held at the San Diego Central Library to honor "The Kid" on this special day that only scratched the surface of this complex, obsessive man's journey from a local playground to Baseball's Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York.

As a youngster, Ted dreamed big. "All I want out of life is that when I walk down the street folks will say, "There goes the greatest hitter that ever lived."

He was that... and much more. It has been said, "Ted Williams was the man John Wayne wanted to be."

George Mitrovich's City Club of San Diego sponsored an hour-long event he called "Remembering Ted Williams" with local politicians, a part-owner of the Padres, a Marine pilot, biographer Bill Nowlin, Red Sox poet laureate Dick Flavin and Ted's only surviving daughter, Claudia. Most of their memories related to his time with the Red Sox, his military service as a Marine Corps fighter pilot in WWII and Korea, his charitable efforts on behalf of the Jimmy Fund for cancer research and his love and dedication to fishing which also earned him induction into the International Game Fish Association Hall of Fame.

The local Ted Williams SABR chapter organized "Ted Williams: A Celebration of his 100th Birthday" hosted by chapter president Tom Larwin. The focus of this symposium was on Ted's youth in San Diego and, in particular, his two years with the Pacific Coast League Padres.

Retired Hoover High School Librarian Dennis Donley explained that Williams lived on the boundary between San

Diego High School and Hoover, but chose to attend Hoover because he didn't think he could make the baseball team at San Diego. The reason Ted went to Hoover is because he wanted to pitch and San Diego had a strong pitching staff.

Many fans know that Williams was only 17-years-old when he joined the hometown Padres during their first year at Lane Field. But, most people don't realize that at the end of the 1936 season, Ted returned to Hoover to complete the second semester of his senior year. Dan Boyle detailed the background of his signing with the Padres instead of a major league team. His mother, May Williams, wanted Teddy to stay close to home.

The kid struck out in his first professional at-bat and a week later, on July 3, 1936, he even pitched a few innings in a mop-up role against the Los Angeles Angels. The youngster learned two important things that day. He may have been overmatched on the mound, but he was not intimidated in the batter's box. Ted Williams collected his first two base hits.

Williams turned 18 on August 30, 1936. Two days later, he suddenly became the Padres starting left fielders for the remainder of the tight pennant race. Regular left fielder, Ivey Shiver, had jumped the club to take a job coaching football in Georgia. The kid was ready. He batted .310 for the month of September to raise his season average to .271.

His first home run in the playoffs was reported by San Diego Evening Tribune sportswriter Earl Keller. "Williams 'teed-off' on one of Ludolph's curve balls and hit it far over the centerfield fence - some 365 feet from the plate."

Keller and Williams formed a bond, so the story I told about Ted's 1937 season was highlighted through the written words of Earl Keller. Ted's volatile relationship with the Boston press corps is well documented, but his friendship with Keller was



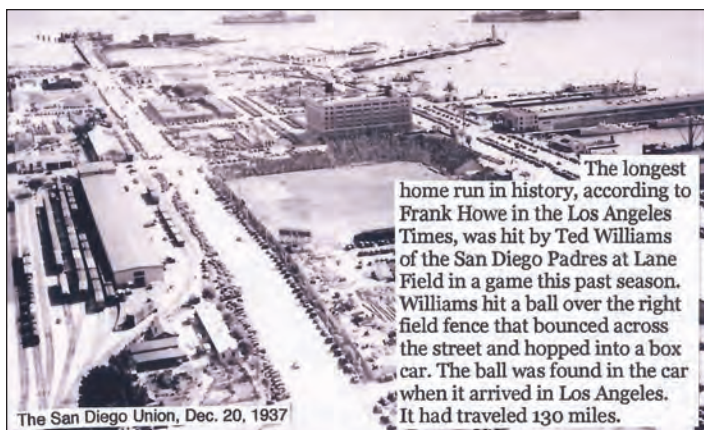
Young Ted Williams at Lane Field, San Diego (1936)



SABR president introduces Bill Swank at Tribute to Ted Williams held August 30, 2018 at the San Diego Central Library.

Continued on Page 7

Ted Williams - A Celebration of his 100th Birthday Continued from Page 6



*San Diego Union article about
"The Longest Home Run in History."*

genuinely warm and lasting. Here is a sampling:

"Have you noticed how the outfielders step backwards when Ted Williams comes to the plate? Yes, sir, that kid is making a name for himself. If you want him to hit a home run every time he comes to bat, just yell, 'Come on, Lamb!' How that does burn him up." - Evening Tribune, March 20, 1937

(Headline) WILLIAMS HAMMERS OUT FIVE CIRCUIT CLOUDS IN SERIES; ANGELS NEXT. "The batting star of yesterday's twin-bill was 18-year-old Ted Williams of the Padres. He put the Padres ahead, 2 to 1 in the seventh inning of the first encounter by smacking a long home run over the right field fence, and in the nightcap, he hit another homer and a double to drive in four runs. Williams record for the week shows he hit five home runs, drove in 14 runs and batted .440." - Evening Tribune, June 28, 1937

"Lefty O'Doul, skipper of the San Francisco Seals, sure would like to have Ted Williams, San Diego flyhawk, under his wing for the next year. Williams has drawn more praise from O'Doul than from any other manager in the Pacific Coast League, and every time Lefty sees or gets a chance to give the kid a helpful pointer, he does. 'That kid is the best prospect this circuit has seen since Joe DiMaggio,' says O'Doul. 'He has the makings of a great player, and, if handled right, he will go places. I would like to be his teacher.'" - Evening Tribune, September 1, 1937

"All Williams did was smack two home runs - his 19th and 20th - to drive in three runs and make 'Sad Sam' Gibson, the league's No. 1 hurler, all the sadder." - Evening Tribune, September 2, 1937

Earl Keller published statistics that showed Williams batted .300, however when 132 hits are divided by 454 at-bats, the correct average is .291 as recorded in the 1938 Official Baseball Guide. His 23 home runs set a new team record that wasn't broken until 1947 when Max West "smacked 43 circuit clouts."

San Diego fans love this unconfirmed article that was not penned by Earl Keller.

"The longest home run in history, according to Frank Howe

in the Los Angeles Times, was hit by Ted Williams of the San Diego Padres at Lane Field in a game this past season. Williams hit a ball over the right field fence that bounced across the street and hopped into a box car. The ball was found in the car when it arrived in Los Angeles. It had traveled 130 miles." - San Diego Union, December 20, 1937

Ted had already been sold to the Boston Red Sox earlier in the month that story appeared in the newspaper. He would hit many more memorable home runs and fulfill his dream.

To summarize Ted Williams, the man, I like this quote from Leigh Montville, the writer. "He had comforted the sick, helped the needy. Money never had been his false god."

Reflecting on his hometown in a 1980s interview with historian James D. Smith III, Ted said, "San Diego was the nicest little town in the world. How the hell was I to know it was the nicest town in the world? I'd never been any place."

PLACE OF BIRTH, DIST. NO. 701		California State Board of Health		State Index No.	
(To be inserted in Standard)		BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS		Local Registered No. 1007	
STANDARD CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH					
City of SAN DIEGO					
Rural Registration District (No.) Sunshine Maternity Home (Ward)					
FULL NAME OF CHILD Samuel Williams					
PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS					
SEX OF CHILD Male		DATE OF BIRTH Aug. 30, 1918		MOTHER May Venzor	
FATHER Samuel S. Williams		RESIDENCE San Diego, Calif.		CITY San Diego	
RACE White		BIRTHDAY 30		BIRTHPLACE Ardsley, N.Y.	
OCCUPATION Photographer		BIRTHDAY 25		BIRTHPLACE El Paso, Texas	
OCCUPATION (at birth, profession, or particular kind of work)		OCCUPATION (at birth, profession, or particular kind of work)		OCCUPATION (at birth, profession, or particular kind of work)	
Is a psychopathic for Delinquent Homeless ward?		YES		Number of children of this mother now living	
I hereby certify that I attended the birth of this child, who was born on the date above stated.		(Signature) J. H. Steade		DATE 8/21/1918	
Given name added from a supplemental report		Address San Diego, Calif.		FILED Sep. 4 '18	

Ted Williams birth certificate... August 20 or August 30, 1918?

Potpourri Events Calendar

California At Bat Runs Through December 30, 2018

Baseball exhibit covering the Gold Rush to the Modern Era. Includes the Pacific Coast League. Located at the California Museum, 1020 O Street, Sacramento.

The 25th Annual Dick Dobbins PCL Player and Family Reunion Saturday August 17, 2019

Ryan O'Connell Hall, 575 West Estudillo in San Leandro. More details will come out as we get closer to the event.

Paul I. Fagan, the Idea Man, and Seals Owner Uncle Charlie Graham, and Their Drive to Make the PCL a Third Major League *By Joye Ogradowski*



Paul I. Fagan
SF Seals Associate
Owner/Vice President

In early 1945, Paul I. Fagan quietly purchased a third interest in the San Francisco Seals to become a partner with Charles "Uncle Charlie" Graham and Charles Strub. The extremely wealthy local capitalist would instill a much-needed cash flow into the building of a San Francisco "baseball empire." As Uncle Charlie said, the added capital would give him a chance to go after players heretofore beyond his financial reach, and out of it should come the "Yankees of the west."

The same year, Uncle Charlie entered into a working agreement with the New York Giants that provided the Giants with first options on players the Seals had signed. This was a change for Graham, who had fervently argued in the past for prohibiting such affiliations, and while the extra funds helped him weather the lean times during and after the war, he felt an era in baseball was coming to an end.

Enter Mr. Fagan. Uncle Charlie, a baseball man for nearly 50 years at the time, didn't know what to make of his younger partner at first, but was open to suggestions. Fagan, known as The Idea Man, didn't waste any time coming up with plans for the future. He decided that "it was all wrong to wind up a Sunday with a short seven inning game." He argued that "in the theater, the last act is the big one. It carries the punch. What

goes before doesn't matter so much relatively. Let the first game be seven innings and the second one nine. Late-comers may walk in at the third or fourth inning and not miss the feature attraction of the day. No matter how late they arrive, they will still have a full length regulation game ahead of them."

That particular idea didn't fly, but some of the others did, or came close.

Fagan was not one to begin a project and not see it through to its conclusion - a good conclusion, or a bad one. He and Uncle Charlie both believed that the Pacific Coast League should become the third major league. They were adamant. They came up with a concrete plan to present at the PCL directors meeting at the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles that would make the Coast League eligible for major league rating by at least 1948. Their five-point plan included: 1) Abolish binding agreements with major league clubs; 2) Oppose the drafting of Coast League players; 3) Improve or build new parks, particularly in San Diego and Sacramento; 4) Drop any dependence on present major leagues, and; 5) Unify the eight directorates into a round table entity, all thinking and working on the same program.

Uncle Charlie explained that "The Pacific Coast is the fastest growing section on the United States. "We are 2,000 to 3,000 miles away from the nearest major competition, so our people can't overlap present major attendance."

Because the unheard of major league request was a slow process, there was plenty of time for Fagan to forge bigger and better ideas that baffled some and astonished others. In November, 1945, The Fog Man, not to be confused with The Frog Man of the Underseas Demolition units in World War II, was contracted to work for the Seals baseball club beginning in 1946 to "demolish fog in, above, and around the stadium for all home games, wiping out one of San Francisco's most widely know atmospheric assets, the good swirling mist," quipped Clyde Giraldo, San Francisco sports columnist.

Fagan planned to "contact Mr. Pleasants (who would use his \$200 machine, costing \$1 an hour to operate, and which impressed the United States Army, after exhaustive tests) with a view of putting him on our pay roll as a definite adjunct of baseball," Fagan explained. "We have excellent baseball weather, really, out here at 16th and Bryant, but I intend to make it foolproof in the fans' minds. By securing an expert to dispel fog, and covering the stands to keep off any wind, and remodeling the lobby and under the stands for warmth, the fan doesn't exist who would want to stay away from our games be-

Continued on Page 9



Uncle Charlie Graham
SF Seals Owner/President
*Photo courtesy of San Francisco
History Center, San Francisco
Public Library*



Photo by Francis Stewart

April 18, 1945: Seals Stadium boasted the first female ushers. They had a tanning lamp inside the stadium. "Since our girls represent California," the head Usherette told the Chronicle, "they must look healthy and sunkist at all times." That included new hunter green uniforms and gold caps, nail polish, nylon stockings, and properly coiffed hair.

The Third Major League Continued from page 8

cause of climatic reasons." Fagan mused: "Just think. Advertisements saying: 'Guaranteed no fog.'"

A day later, Fagan announced that Seals players would no longer wear dirty uniforms. "You wouldn't pay good money to see a musical show if the chorus girls wore soiled and dirty costumes. Neither do women patrons nowadays care to watch a baseball game where the players wear sweaty, dirty uniforms.

"All too often in a double-header, the players dirty up one uniform in the first game and go in and take a shower and put the same dirty uniform on again for the second game. Next season we'll have enough uniforms, on the road as well as at home, so that the men can have a freshly laundered uniform for these occasions."

In the meantime, baseball meetings were held in December, 1945, where the majors turned down the PCL's bid for a major league label for 1946. Coast president Clarence 'Pants' Rowland was told to come back in 1946 and re-submit his request. "I am not only positive that the PCL will go major, but that it will happen very soon," said Rowland at the time. "We are now preparing to go into the whole matter with a major league committee, not to discuss whether the Coast League should go major, but to work out details of when and how."

In February, 1946, the major leagues appointed a board to hear the PCL application to become a third major league. The committee was appointed by presidents William Harridge and Ford Frick of the American and National Leagues, and included PK Wrigley, president of the Chicago Cubs; William E. Benswanger, president of the Pittsburgh Pirates; ad general managers Leslie M. O'Connor of the Chicago White Sox and William O. DeWitt of the St. Louis Browns from the American League. Rowland said the four major league officials, whose clubs would soon be opening spring training in California, would meet with the PCL "sometime in the spring."

The PCL's major league aspirations received a boost in March, 1946, when major league leaders received an encouraging report from PCL President Rowland on Coast League conditions and ambitions, and agreed to further consider the matter at their next meeting.

After numerous delays, a much-anticipated meeting was finally held in Los Angeles in December, 1946. There the PCL won one battle and lost another. The PCL won protection from "invasion" by the majors, and officially presented arguments as to why the PCL should be recognized as a third major league, before receptive representatives of the National and American Leagues.

In the Biltmore Hotel meeting hall, major-minor league agreements were to include stipulations that the majors could not invade the territory of the minors unless: the city to be invaded agreed; that the other clubs agreed; that upon 100% approval, a committee of seven men be appointed to agree upon a reasonable price and if, and within 30 days, an agreement could not be reached, the deal would fall through and the minor league club would retain its franchise.

The PCL, however, would not become the third major league in 1946, or perhaps even the following year. Both major leagues conceded that, in time, the PCL would be granted their



NY155-12/11/47-New York - Executives at the joint American and National League meeting here 12/11, after denying the Pacific Coast League request for big-league status. Left to right: Ford Frick, president of the National League; Clarence (Pants) Rowland, president of the Pacific Coast League; Commissioner A.B. (Happy) Chandler, and Will Harridge, president of the American League.

Credit: Acme Telephoto

bid, but not in the near future. Phil MacPhail of the Yankees also reassured Graham that the majors had no designs on the PCL, meaning they had no plans to move major league teams to the west coast.

While the subject of the PCL becoming a third major league dominated the sports pages over the next year, the final decision was not made until the major league winter meetings in December, 1947. San Francisco sports columnist Bob Stevens, who faithfully covered the subject for three years, wrote, "They buried the body at the Waldorf-Astoria this afternoon." With one brief statement, the major leagues denied all requests by the PCL.

The terse resolution read as follows: "The major leagues recognize that various sections of the country have developed greatly and that increasing population and baseball interest therein should eventually result in expansion of major league baseball to such territories, but at present there appears to be no minor league which is entitled to major league classification. The major leagues further believe that minor leagues or clubs applying for major league classification must assume responsibility for any necessary adjustments of territorial rights of others, must have adequate population, income and park facilities and must establish that operation of major league status requested is practical and justified."

The disappointment was palpable, although Uncle Charlie was able to joke: "Unlike last year in Los Angeles, laughed Charles H. Graham, they at least invited us to sit down. Even had chairs waiting for us. I smiled and complimented Mr. Chandler on the improvement. However, I hadn't talked long before I sensed the closed minds that faced me. It made me feel cold all over. But, even in the light of the subsequent statement, I still think we can fight this thing out. We gained terrific prestige all over the country for our battle, which was clean and in the open, and particularly has the press of the East awakened to our ambitions."

PCL Encyclopedia Updates *By Mark Macrae*

Contributors to this issue include Carlos Bauer, Rocky Bauer, and Mark Macrae

- 1) Will Van Stone (1911 Vernon) - Throws - Right
- 2) Lyle Palmer died June 17, 2018 in Walnut Creek, Ca
- 3) Fred Carman (1909 / 11 Seals) - Weight 200
- 4) Baker, catcher (1911 Sacramento) is Glenn Baker
- 5) Ferdinand William "Ferd" Henkel (1911 Portland), Born 1-27-1886 Portland, Oregon; Died 6-3-54 Portland, Oregon
- 6) Mutt McGinty played 1B with Portland in 1909 and 1910..... For 1909 - 1-Game, 1-AB, 1-Hit, 1-single, 1-Stolen base, Average 1.000...1910 Portland, 1B, 1-game, 1-AB, everything else is zero. (A typo in the last edition left information out)
- 7) Lloyd Snook, 1911 Portland, Throws - Right
- 8) George I. Palmer (1911 LA) born June 1889, Wisconsin
- 9) 1911 Los Angeles player named Wilson that played two games is Seymour Wilson. Born...10-15-85 Texas; Died 7-20-73 Los Angeles, Ca. Wilson was playing for Galt (Independent) and his manager (Bill James) recommended him to Cap Dillon
- 10) Lou Castro (1904 Portland). His passport lists his name as Louis Michael Castro. Height is 5'8", Weight-165, Born in Medellin, Columbia
- 11) Walt Pocekay died May 30, 2018 in Red Bluff, California.
- 12) Jimmy Byrnes played one game for Vernon in 1911. He caught and went 0 for 2 at the plate. This was the second game of a double header on July 9.
- 13) The player identified as "Horace" Greenwood is actually Lester "Ginger" Greenwood. He was born in June 1889 in Woodland, California. He bats and throws right handed.
- 14) McHenry Bishop Steyer (1911 Los Angeles). Nicknamed Jack or Mac. Throws - Right. Born...3-21-1886 Missouri...Died 10-17-1960 Glendale, Ca

Wild and Innovative Ideas at 16th and Bryant *Compiled by Joye Ogrodowski*

"Nothing can be deader than a ball park in the first week of January," but Seals Stadium was a beehive of activity in the early months of 1946. While awaiting the next major league meeting dealing with the Pacific Coast League's bid to become the third major league, co-owner Paul I. Fagan went into high gear, introducing innovation after innovation, to keep things interesting. Plans included:

- A dance band would be hired to play music from a new platform located over the entrance and behind the press box, and amplifiers would be installed to ensure the music would be heard in every corner of the park.
- Four rows of bulbs would be added to each light tower.
- The lobby would be renovated to include a roof, with a waiting section and leather lounges. An interior decorator would be redesigning the ladies' powder room. Fresh flowers would adorn the ladies' room as well as the front office.
- Advertising would be removed from the outside walls of the stadium, and only framed ads permitted inside left field. The Seals would hire their own bat boys, specifically disciplined and dressed.
- Each Seal player would have five complete sets of uniforms, instead of the usual two, at home and on the road.
- 600 new box seats would be installed, starting the week of January 20, 1945.
- Fireproof bleachers, seating 1,600, with concrete foundations, would be erected in right field.
- A private open wire would connect the Seals first-aid room with an ambulance service.



- Graders would level the entire playing surface from fence to fence, to eliminate bad hops.
- The new roof would extend from the Seals office tower, above the main entrance on 16th Street, down the first base line to the first light tower, a few feet from home plate. According to Fagan, "The new roof will shelter the grandstand from virtually home plate to the right field boundary.
- Fireproof bleachers, seating 1,600, with concrete foundations, would begin going up in right field.
- An all-glass observation room would be installed several hundred feet in the air atop the light tower, behind home plate, where one man would watch the stands for disturbances, fights, poor ushering service, etc., and report via an all-points switchboard to the proper authority.

PCL Managers Fastest to One Hundred Victories *Continued from page 1*

header against Oakland. The 55th win, which gave McNeely a 100-55 record as a PCL manager, came in the first game of the July 4 double-header in Oakland, an 8-3 win behind Ed Bryan.

Things did not go well after that. Sacramento had a record of 40-49 after McNeely's milestone win and finished the 1933 season in fourth place. The next year the Senators fell to seventh with a record of 79-109, and by 1935, McNeely was running the business side of the franchise as well, putting up player contracts as collateral to prevent the team's being taken over by the banks. The franchise was finally purchased by the St. Louis Cardinals prior to the 1936 season for a reported \$5,000 and the outstanding debt owed to lenders.



Casey Stengel

The other PCL manager to reach 100 wins in less than 160 games was Casey Stengel with the 1946 Oakland Oaks, who began the season at 100-59 but fell short of the pennant, finishing second to Lefty O'Doul's San Francisco Seals as both teams shattered minor league attendance records.

Others who came close include Tony DeFrancesco of the Sacramento River Cats, who accomplished the feat in 160 games during 2003-2004, and Bobby Bragan, who did it in 162 games with the Hollywood Stars in 1953.

But it was Earl McNeely whose record was broken by Stubby Clapp; McNeely whose career PCL managerial record over the equivalent of three full seasons was 273-274, and who never came close to winning a pennant. And it is certain McNeely never even knew he held that record.

YouTube Highlights from the 2018 PCL Reunion

PCLHS member James McGee has provided this YouTube link with highlights from the 2018 PCL Reunion.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DIPchwqobtA>

2018 PCLHS Player & Family Reunion *Continued from page 1*

Following the lunch, Rob Garratt and Andy McCue gave a presentation on Major League Baseball Coming to California in 1958. The cultural change in California as the PCL leaves its two largest markets, to be replaced by the Giants and Dodgers. Following their presentation the pair opened up the floor to questions.

After their presentation, a PCL Hall of Fame plaque was presented to the family of 2018 inductee Dick Dobbins. Although

not a player, team or league executive, Dobbins' contributions to the legacy of the PCL are numerous. Beginning in the 1950's Dobbins began to photograph many of the players, wrote articles and provided support for more than four decades, starting with an article for the San Francisco Seals yearbook in the 1950's.



Plaque presented to Pete Dobbins (Dick's son) by Mark Macrae.

Dobbins later organized several exhibits, interviewed hundreds of players, authored two books, and helped organize dinners and functions for the benefit of the PCL alumni. Shortly after his death, the Northern California PCL Player/ Family reunion was renamed in his honor. Although Dobbins has been gone for almost twenty years, a quick survey of the crowd revealed that more than half of the attendees in the room had the opportunity to meet him.

The 24th reunion came to a close and we're already working on next year's function. Mark your calendar for August 17, 2019. No weddings or vacations on that weekend.



The cake.