



MR. BASEBALL



The Editor says "Work, Work, Work." A singularly ugly piece of verbage, that. A verb/noun with the light, lilting euphonia of a Polish industrial park, without regard to the three titles and fifty plus hours our ilk endure in the dark 'Vacation Months'. It's a horrible price we pay to live at this beach, and many succumb to attrition. If you're from elsewhere, don't pass on a curve, let us play through, and, above all, TIP.

Madden has his work ethic team; this is mine:

	NL	AL
1B	McCovey	Gehrig
2B	Schoendienst	Fox
3B	Santo or Hack	Robinson or Yost
SS	Banks	Boudreau
LF	Musial	Goslin
CF	Ashburn or Martin	Averill
RF	Furillo or Ott or Oh	Kaline
C	Lombardi	Freehan
RHP	Matty	Johnson
LHP	Spahn	Kaat

A note -- the AL left field spot would belong to Joe Jackson, hands down, if he wasn't co-conspirator in the greatest betrayal of the working grunt in Sporting history. Joe was a fabulous ballplayer, with a .356 life avg., terrific speed and power, great glove and arm, much like Bobby Bonds would like to be in 2003. Unfortunately, he was a crook. Look, I'm a fan of "Field of Dreams" as much as the next guy, but this clown deserves neither your tears nor sympathy. There has been much revisionist thinking in regard to whether Joe got a fair shake; after all, he did hit .375 in the series, with 6 RBI's and 4 extra base hits. If you've ever watched a pool hustler in action, you know the value of picking your spots.

His hits amounted to nothing in the White Sox offense, mostly non-existent with men in scoring position. His base running was suspect, once holding third with less than two out on a grounder to short. His infallible arm led to a critical error in Game 4. And, most damningly, the Reds hit three triples to Jackson's left field in the series. How many triples have you ever seen hit to left field in your life, discounting Jeremy's last T-Ball game? That's how good Joe Jackson was. His other seven slimy felons clumsily accounted for eight errors, but Joe was clean, and made it look easy.

The fact remains, he signed a confession to tanking a World Series, a series where folks like you and me would queue up 200 deep to watch a small mechanical man progress around a simulated diamond, orchestrated by telegraph because there was no radio, and only if we were lucky enough to have the day off and be next to a Western Union office. This bum and his pals have been relegated to the dustbin of history, and it's only right.

QUIZ

Who are these guys?

Hey, barkeep. You know who that guy is over there? What a ballplayer! One game, he hits four homers and a double at Ebbets Field. After that, both Labine and Newcombe drill him with fastballs, breakin' bones and all. So all he does is hit .308 with 23 homers for the year. Next year, same thing, beanball busts his forearm, out for the year. Now he's gettin' ticked. Next July, Ruben Gomez of the Giants puts one in his ribs, and he's had enough, so he charges the mound. Gomez sees this guy, three inches taller and forty pounds heavier, comin' at him with homicide on his mind, and he starts back-peddlin'. Faster and faster, until this big guy is chasing this little dude all the way into the dugout. Everybody was laughin' themselves sick. And then Gomez comes, tentatively, back out of the dugout, and he'd armed himself. You know with what? A friggin' icepick! We were dyin'!

Yah, sure. But I'm not the only cat with a story in this dive. See him? He hit the longest home run in history. True story. Over the laundry at Crosley Field, into a truck, and thirty miles to market. Haw, haw, Ruth should do so good, eh, Schnozz?

Hold it down. That haggard lookin' dude over there is a legend. Rookie of the year with a league leading ERA and complete games, he wrecks his knee in spring training, comes back too fast, and kisses it all goodbye. Imagine, 33 CG in 43 starts, 27-13 and 2.47 ERA, with 70 BB in 353 innings. Remarkable.

Oh, sure. I'm Mr. Failed Potential. What about this guy next to me? Rookie year, he's on fire; goes 8-0, with 4 shutouts in his first six games and wins 58 games his first three years. After that, nada. What a shame.

Bartender, give us a round. Look, I don't want to hear about it. I was back-up to that guy over there with the freak homer,

and I didn't do too bad. He came up lame right after the All-Star break, and I hit well, .309 until August 2. That night we lost to the dog-ass Braves in Boston in twelve innings. I just couldn't take it (I mean, the Braves, for Chrissake?), so I went back to my hotel room, locked myself in the bathroom, and slashed my throat with a razor. Impulsive, sure, but hey, I was upset.

I won't be happy until we have every boy in America between the ages of six and sixteen wearing a glove and swinging a bat.

- Babe Ruth

A baseball gossip addict from Cannon Beach, Oregon writes:

Dear Mr. Baseball,

I realize you don't deal in baseball gossip, but I heard through the grapevine that Jose Canseco isn't his real name; it was changed in the '70s, and after plastic surgery, the name change and steroid use allegations and paternity suits, he really was a Mafia informant, an informant for the Feds and became part of the Witness Protection Program -- mainly because he knew that Jimmy Hoffa was alive and posing (after surgery also), as Marge Schott, a baseball owner.

What do YOU think?

Sincerely,
Donna

Dear Gossip Addict,

Listen, 'Donna', or whatever your real name is, this reporter is a card carrying Teamster from the days he had a real job, and Mr. Hoffa made me a lot of money. So quit with the libelous allusions to this Canseco person, toot sweet, O.K.? And you're correct on one score, I'll deal with this kind of yellow journalism when you can buy this rag for six bits in the supermarket check line.

However, there is a kernel of truth in your theory. Canseco, in his previous life, was a Native American member of the little-known "Jinsoakt" Nation. There he was known as 'Coyote Passing Wind' after several high speed chases with the Reservation Police while astride his possessed palomino, 'Diesel'. As far as the Marge Schott rumour goes, I've determined, after painstaking research, that there exists no plastic surgeon so inept.

A "Mr. George Steinbrenner" of New York gushes:

Dear Mr. Baseball,

Just a quick note to let you know how appreciated you are with your excellent knowledge of baseball. Your intellect, interpretive skills, and recall of baseball detail are unsurpassed, except by...

Here I truncate this fulsome correspondence, out of deference to my readers. It continues, Ad Naseum, for several more paragraphs. George, Thomas Boswell refers to you as a 'Corporal of Industry', and I think that is an unwarranted promotion. This toadying up to the press you've so long despised is uncharacteristic, and, frankly, embarrassing. Sell the Yankees, George. In case you didn't notice, this is the first year that baseball's premier franchise has been surpassed in net value by a team from another sport. I'm not sure, but I think it was the Chicago Bulls, whatever that is. Anyway, if you don't speak aesthetics, I'm sure you understand money. Sell now, before you inflict more damage. Sell to someone who knows that to win a pennant, you move the left-center field fence back to 460 feet, stock the roster with right handed, speedy singles hitters and power-hitting left-handers, invest in one losing-streak-stopping pitching ace, and round out the staff with southpaw prospects and journeymen.

It's just that simple. Of course, you may need Billy Martin to motivate these guys, and you need to keep your grubby mitts off the phone; but that's easy.

JIM WEATHERS
CARPENTRY

436-1885
LICENSED • BONDED • INSURED

Icefire
GLASSWORKS
⊖ ⊙ ⊕ ⊚
JIM KINGWELL
POST OFFICE BOX 382
CANNON BEACH, OR 97110
PHONE 503-436-2339

OLYMPIC BOOK EXCHANGE, INC.
"We Buy Books"

PAUL SKEETER
2509 First Street
Tillamook, OR 97141
(503) 842-3846

Parnassus Books
234 Tenth Street
Astoria, Oregon
97103
Monday through Saturday 10-5:30
325-1363

Sandy Stembler
Youngs River Construction & Painting
• Residential • Remodeling • Roofing • Specialty Work •
• Power Washing • Waterproofing • Bead Blasting •
Phone 503-325-2557
Rt. 1 Box 558, Youngs River Road, Astoria, OR 97103

Bruce Johnston
General Contractor
CCB #71672

201 Spruce
Gearhart, Oregon
97138
(503) 738-6621

I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work, the more I live. Life is no brief candle for me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations. G. B. Shaw