

SAN DIEGO TED WILLIAMS SABR CHAPTER

<http://sandiego.sabr.org>

November 23, 2003 e-NEWS, Issue No. 14

IN THIS ISSUE:

- ***Next Regional Meeting Scheduled for Saturday, January 31, 2004...Dick Freeman will be our Keynote Speaker***
- *All-time Padres Team...Our Thoughts!*
- *We Thought You'd Never Ask...Nicknames by Position*
- *Extra Base Hits...Some Facts, Some Trivia*
- *Allan Roth (LA) SABR Chapter News...Regional Meeting Scheduled for Saturday, February 7, 2004*
- *Chapter Members in the News*
- *Catchers ERA (CERA)*
- *Member John Nunes Article in Elysian Fields Quarterly*
- *Baseball Biography Project...New Website*
- *Thinking About the Holidays...How About Some Baseball Gift Cards?*
- *SABR Deadball Era Committee*
- *More Re: Deadball Stars*

NEXT REGIONAL MEETING...

"SUPER BOWL SATURDAY," JANUARY 31, 2004

We have another loaded program with plenty of variety. Leading off will be our keynote speaker, Dick Freeman, President of the San Diego Padres. We are fortunate to have Dick join us and give us the latest in developments for the 2004 ballclub, and an update on Petco Park.

On tap are a couple of members who have research presentations: **Amy Essington** will update us on her research related to "Integration of the Pacific Coast League in San Diego, 1948" and, as an introduction to the subject, **Bill Swank** will offer a personal biography of the late San Diegan, and former PCL Padres player, John Ritchey. We also have brought back after a few year's absence, **Andy McCue** and his popular baseball "Books on Parade." Andy also serves SABR in a variety of ways, notably as a Board member and chair of the Bibliography Committee.

The specific starting time and location are still being worked out. However, you can plan on our meeting time being 9:30 a.m. as usual. Watch for final details in our next e-News.

ALL-TIME PADRES TEAM... OUR THOUGHTS!

Chapter members **Frank Myers** and **Jay Walker** led our Chapter's efforts in coming up with our version of the All-Time Padres as they closed out their final season in Qualcomm Stadium. Their resulting article was produced in the September issue of *Padres Magazine*. In case you didn't obtain a copy, below is the article. We have also inserted the vote results from the fans after each of our Chapter's selections.

"Who is SABR and why do their selections of all-time Padres get their own article? SABR (pronounced saber) stands for the Society for American Baseball Research, a group founded in 1971 that has grown to over 6,000 strong. While SABR encourages research into all facets of baseball and will gladly accept the mathematically challenged as members, it has a reputation as something of a gathering place for the statistically nerdy, er, adept fans. If you holler out "Bring in the lefty to face Bonds" and someone two rows down says "Actually our lefty is a ground ball inducer and Bonds hit 56% more dingers off ground ball pitchers than fly ball pitchers", you've probably just encountered a SABR member.

When the Padres distributed ballots to their fans to select an all-time Padres team, the 100+ members of the local SABR chapter were also invited to apply their methods and choose their own version of the Padres dream team. After ballpark-effect-adjusting this and normalizing that and immersing themselves knee-deep in numbers, here is the team they came up with:

Starting Pitcher (3 positions) – A real horse race. Randy Jones won by acclimation, but battling for place and show were the tightly-bunched pack of Andy Ashby, Andy Benes, Dave Dravecky, Bruce Hurst, Clay Kirby and Eric Show. The late, enigmatic Show (100 wins as a Padre) emerged by a length as one choice, while Andy Benes was a nose in front of Bruce Hurst for the final spot.

Fans' Selections:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Jones (64.4%) | 5. Dravecky (21.6%) | 8. Benes (15.5%) |
| 2. Brown (45%) | 6. Show (20.8%) | 9. Whitson (10.8%) |
| 3. Perry (33.4%) | 7. Hitchcock (20.1%) | 10. Hurst (7.9%) |
| 4. Ashby (33%) | | |

Catcher – this position featured the only player not on the Padres fan ballot to generate some discussion and support, Gene Tenace. (Wonder why? Check out his on-base percentage). But most regard Terry Kennedy and Benito Santiago as the two best catchers in franchise history, and the SABR crew favored Kennedy by a small margin.

Fans' Selections:

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Santiago (55.8%) | 4. Kendall (8.5%) |
| 2. Kennedy (22%) | 5. Cannizzaro (1.7%) |
| 3. Hernandez (9.6%) | |

First Base - Fred McGriff didn't stay in town long enough (less than 3 years). The SABR choice went to one of the early Padre stars and still their all-time career home run leader, Nate Colbert. Consideration of the era (early 70's) and park factors (no inside home run fence) aided in the choice. Ryan Klesko's credentials may exceed Colbert's in a few years.

Fans' Selections:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Garvey (27.4%) | 4. McGriff (15%) |
| 2. Klesko (21.2%) | 5. Joyner (14.5%) |
| 3. Colbert (20.4%) | |

Second Base - the position with the fewest solid candidates. Robbie Alomar was just beginning his career, but his 3 years with the Padres prior to his trade to Toronto were deemed sufficient to overcome challenges from Tim Flannery and Bip Roberts.

Fans' Selections:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Alomar (47.8%) | 4. Roberts (9.9%) |
| 2. Flannery (22.2%) | 5. Veras (6.7%) |
| 3. Wiggins (10.9%) | |

Third Base - this came down to a Ken Caminiti vs. Phil Nevin battle, and Cammy was felt to have a close but clear advantage.

Fans' Selections:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Caminti (52.1%) | 4. Sheffield (14.1%) |
| 2. Nevin (14.8%) | 5. Spiezio (1.9%) |
| 3. Nettles (14.6%) | |

Shortstop - while Ozzie Smith may be in the Hall of Fame, it wasn't his 4 years as a Padre that got him there. Brilliant as he was in the field (and many feel there was none better than Oz in a Padre uniform), a composite .230 batting average and .278 slugging average represent a lot of runs that were never scored. Garry Templeton played solid shortstop for a decade with the Padres and gets the nod.

Fans' Selections:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Smith (52.9%) | 4. Fernandez (4.9%) |
| 2. Templeton (30.6%) | 5. Hernandez (2.8%) |
| 3. Gomez (7.4%) | |

Outfield (3 positions) - Tony Gwynn and Dave Winfield are no-brainers. The contest for the third spot generated the most heated discussion of the day, and the debate soon narrowed down to Steve Finley vs. Gene Richards. When the dust had cleared, Richards garnered the final outfield spot by a single vote. Richards batted .291 in his 7 years as a Padre and ranks 2nd behind Gwynn in Padre career stolen bases.

Fans' Selections:

- | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Gwynn (93.1%) | 5. Kotsay (16.8%) | 8. Kruk (7.9%) |
| 2. Winfield (65.2%) | 6. Vaughn (14%) | 9. Richards (5.0%) |
| 3. Finley (42%) | 7. McReynolds (9.8%) | 10. Gaston (4.8%) |
| 4. Henderson (25.3%) | | |

Closer - Rollie Fingers and Goose Gossage had some good years with the Padres, but Trevor Hoffman is the clear #1 choice here.

Fans' Selections:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Hoffman (77.9%) | 4. Davis (3.1%) |
| 2. Fingers (9.5%) | 5. Lefferts (0.8%) |
| 3. Gossage (8%) | |

Manager - one participant said his head liked Dick Williams but his heart preferred Bruce Bochy, so he was voting Bochy. Another one said his head wanted Bochy but his heart liked Williams. He also was voting Bochy. While sentiment was there for Williams, the vote was decidedly in Bochy's favor."

Fans' Selections:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Bochy (64.7%) | 4. McNamara (4.5%) |
| 2. Williams (18.2%) | 5. Gomez (4.3%) |
| 3. McKeon (6.4%) | |

So the final All-Time Padres Team, at least the way SABR sees it, and compared to the fans is as follows:

| | <u>SABR</u> | <u>Fans'</u> |
|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Starting Pitcher - | Randy Jones | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Starting Pitcher - | Eric Show | Kevin Brown |
| Starting Pitcher - | Andy Benes | Gaylord Perry |
| Catcher - | Terry Kennedy | Benito Santiago |
| First Base - | Nate Colbert | Steve Garvey |
| Second Base - | Roberto Alomar | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Third Base - | Ken Caminiti | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Shortstop - | Garry Templeton | Ozzie Smith |
| Outfielder - | Tony Gwynn | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Outfielder - | Dave Winfield | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Outfielder - | Gene Richards | Steve Finley |
| Closer - | Trevor Hoffman | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Manager - | Bruce Bochy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**WE THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER ASK...
NICKNAMES BY POSITION**

SABR member **Frank Solensky** frank@SOLENSKY.ORG came up with the frequency of nicknames by position:

P: 119 Lefty

C: 9 Red

1B: 8 Dutch, Lefty

17 Red
13 Doc
11 Dutch

4 Dutch, Doc

5 Red, Moose, Big Bill, Doc

2B: 10 Red
6 Dutch
4 Mike, Deacon

3B: 8 Red
7 Dutch
5 Rabbit

OF: 15 Red, Lefty
10 Doc

A player is counted at each position played. Players with multiple nicknames weren't counted as separate entries: it might alter the frequencies a bit but not by a lot. The nickname 'Stretch' shows up only eight times, five of them being connected to Jack Phillips (1B 1947-49 NY Yankees; 1B, 3B, P 1949-52 Pittsburgh; 1B, 2B, 3B, OF 1955-56 Detroit).

EXTRA BASE HITS... SOME FACTS, SOME TRIVIA

Here are some statistics developed by SABR member **Clifford Otto**, subs1@OTTOEXEC.ORG, related to extra base hits as a percentage of hits. Please note that all these numbers were taken from the Lahman 5.0 database and only include stats through 2002, so there could be some changes when the 2003 numbers are included.

Players with at least 3000 career hits:

| <u>%ExBH</u> | <u>Player</u> | <u>%ExBH</u> | <u>Player</u> | <u>%ExBH</u> | <u>Player</u> |
|--------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|---------------|
| 40.30% | Willie Mays | 30.55% | Robin Yount | 24.46% | Pete Rose |
| 39.17% | Hank Aaron | 29.08% | Honus Wagner | 24.29% | Tony Gwynn |
| 37.93% | Stan Musial | 28.84% | Paul Waner | 23.99% | Cap Anson |
| 35.48% | George Brett | 28.71% | Paul Molitor | 21.26% | Rod Carew |
| 35.14% | Dave Winfield | 28.62% | Rickey Henderson | 20.27% | Eddie Collins |
| 33.86% | Cal Ripken Jr. | 28.20% | Roberto Clemente | | |
| 33.84% | Carl Yastrzemski | 27.82% | Nap Lajoie | | |
| 33.76% | Eddie Murray | 27.12% | Ty Cobb | | |
| 32.32% | Al Kaline | 25.67% | Lou Brock | | |
| 32.19% | Tris Speaker | 25.15% | Wade Boggs | | |

Players with at least 2000 career hits and an extra-base hit percentage of 40%, or better:

| <u>%ExBH</u> | <u>Player</u> | <u>%ExBH</u> | <u>Player</u> |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------|
| 48.74% | Barry Bonds | 41.60% | Reggie Jackson |
| 47.20% | Babe Ruth | 40.52% | Eddie Mathews |
| 45.43% | Mike Schmidt | 40.34% | Joe Carter |
| 43.73% | Lou Gehrig | 40.30% | Frank Robinson |
| 42.82% | Ken Griffey Jr. | 40.30% | Willie Mays |
| 42.70% | Willie Stargell | 40.23% | Johnny Mize |

| | | | |
|--------|------------------|--------|-------------|
| 42.52% | Harmon Killebrew | 40.17% | Duke Snider |
| 42.21% | Jimmie Foxx | | |
| 42.09% | Ted Williams | | |
| 41.61% | Willie McCovey | | |

The other end of the spectrum (below 20%) for players with at least 2000 career hits:

| <u>%ExBH</u> | <u>Player</u> | <u>%ExBH</u> | <u>Player</u> |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 12.56% | Maury Wills | 17.42% | Billy Hamilton |
| 13.23% | Patsy Donovan | 17.68% | Richie Ashburn |
| 14.29% | Willie Keeler | 18.00% | Stuffy McInnis |
| 16.54% | Fred Tenney | 18.73% | Deacon White |
| 16.78% | John Ward | 18.85% | Nellie Fox |
| 17.16% | Larry Bowa | 19.45% | Brett Butler |
| 17.24% | Clyde Milan | 19.68% | Willie Randolph |
| 17.32% | Lloyd Waner | | |

Players with at least 10,000 career at bats:

| <u>At Bats</u> | <u>%ExBH</u> | <u>Player</u> | <u>At Bats</u> | <u>%ExBH</u> | <u>Player</u> |
|----------------|--------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------|
| 10006 | 40.30% | Frank Robinson | 10195 | 32.19% | Tris Speaker |
| 10881 | 40.30% | Willie Mays | 11008 | 30.55% | Robin Yount |
| 12364 | 39.17% | Hank Aaron | 10430 | 29.08% | Honus Wagner |
| 10972 | 37.93% | Stan Musial | 10654 | 28.72% | Brooks Robinson |
| 10349 | 35.48% | George Brett | 10835 | 28.71% | Paul Molitor |
| 11003 | 35.14% | Dave Winfield | 10889 | 28.62% | Rickey Henderson |
| 11551 | 33.86% | Cal Ripken Jr. | 11434 | 27.12% | Ty Cobb |
| 11988 | 33.84% | Carl Yastrzemski | 10332 | 25.67% | Lou Brock |
| 11336 | 33.76% | Eddie Murray | 14053 | 24.46% | Pete Rose |
| 10116 | 32.32% | Al Kaline | 10277 | 23.99% | Cap Anson |
| | | | 10078 | 22.46% | Rabbit Maranville |
| | | | 10230 | 21.26% | Luis Aparicio |

The leaders in extra-base percentage for various levels of career at bats, and the number of players exceeding the threshold:

| <u>At Bats</u> | <u>40%+</u> | <u>Leader</u> | <u>Player</u> |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 4000+.... | 56 | 51.72% | Mark McGwire |
| 3000-3999 | 19 | 49.28% | Carlos Delgado |
| 2000-2999 | 16 | 46.84% | Troy Glaus |
| 1000-1999 | 22 | 47.02% | Lance Berkman |
| 500-999 | 24 | 53.09% | Bobby Estelella |

The other end of the spectrum for extra-base percentage for various levels of career at bats, and the number of players below the threshold:

| <u>At Bats</u> | <u><20%</u> | <u>Worst</u> | <u>Player</u> |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| 4000+.... | 98 | 10.41% | Roy Thomas |

| | | | |
|-----------|-----|--------|---------------|
| 3000-3999 | 64 | 11.55% | Mike Tresh |
| 2000-2999 | 120 | 9.02% | Morrie Rath |
| 1000-1999 | 316 | 7.49% | Dickey Pearce |
| 500-999 | 475 | 1.64% | Ned Garvin |

ALLAN ROTH SABR CHAPTER NEWS... MEETING SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 7, 2004

Notes from the Roth Chapter's President, **Stephen Roney**..."First off, I have scheduled the AAF for a meeting on the first Saturday in February, which is February 7. This will be the standard 10am to 3pm meeting. As always, I need research presentations. Additionally, I will be attempting to acquire a speaker that I can announce in time for the final announcement."

CHAPTER MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

Andy Strasberg was featured in the September *Padres Magazine* in an article about his management of the variety of activities related to the last year of Major League baseball in San Diego/Jack Murphy/Qualcomm Stadium.

In the Baseball Hall of Fame's Summer 2003 newsletter, *Memories and Dreams*, **Bob Boynton** was recognized for his research contributions to the Hall in their preparation of reference files for each World Series ever played. Bob helped with those Series games in which the Indians and Padres played.

James D. Smith authored an article for the recent SABR publication, *The National Pastime*, No. 23, entitled "George Brace, Baseball's Foremost Photographer."

CATCHERS ERA (CERA)... PADRES ERA / GARY BENNETT CERA

Our Chapter received this question from Joey Graziano: "the Padres' staff ERA is currently at 4.91, while Gary Bennett's CERA is only at 3.88 (a 1.03 differential). Although I'm not sure how much can be read into this, it strikes me as a pretty impressive stat. Has there ever been a catcher with a CERA a full point lower than their staff ERA?"

Coming to the rescue was **Chuck Rosciam** (baseballcatchers@comcast.net):

"A few years ago I began an extensive study of Catcher's Earned Run Average (CERA) using data available from Retrosheet. After a few months I got bogged down in the vast amount of data and put the study on hold. However, I do have almost complete data from 1990-2002 and complete data for some catchers."

To answer the question, 'Has there ever been a catcher with a CERA a full point lower than their staff ERA', the answer is yes. It has been done by many catchers. However, we now have to define certain criteria of inclusion/exclusion. What is the cutoff (minimum) for the number of innings caught for the season? This is not a simple answer, as it relates to CERA versus Team ERA (TERA)."

*To be considered a full-time catcher, a guy has to have caught 50% or more of his team's games. This would make a full-time catcher season about 700 innings caught. If this alone is the criteria then Gary Bennett is *UNI QUE* (for the years 1990-2003). The next closest guy to him is Dave Nilsson in 1999 (MIL) with a differential of -.509 (CERA of 4.571 and TERA of 5.080). It must be noted that during the data period there are only 271 catcher seasons that qualify (out of the 3700+)."*

HOWEVER, the best CERA-ERA differential seasons have been where catchers only caught 30-50% of the games. Jason Varitek's 2001 season (427 innings) has a differential of -1.197 (CERA of 2.953 and TERA of 4.150). Which leads me to the next conclusion of my "incomplete" study. For the same catcher on the same team whose career progressed from backup to regular alternate to full-time starter (<50 games to 50-100 games to 100+ games) his CERA differential closed in on the team's ERA (whether from a positive or a negative differential). The next question is what is the catcher's career average differential?"

*For the data period the *BEST CAREER CERA DIFFERENTIAL AVERAGE* belongs to those guys whose teams during his tenure have the worst ERA in the league. In other words, the winners (or losers) amongst catchers and their Career CERA depends a great deal upon their team's poor (or good) ERA. For Gary Bennett in 2003, San Diego has the 4th worst ERA in the National League (just ahead of Cin, Col and Mil). But why bad teams?"*

*Using Retrosheet data for some selected catchers, I paired catchers with pitchers (batteries). I found that the *VERY GOOD CERA DIFFERENTIALS* happened when catchers were routinely paired with the Number 1&2 starters. This left the alternate catcher with the dregs as his batterymates (by comparison). In addition, late inning substitution for catchers, resulted in batteries composed of backup catchers and mop-up bullpen hurlers, generally in a losing cause. This tendency happened often enough to significantly widen the gap between 'good CERA catchers' and their team ERA, especially on bad ERA teams."*

*The last observation has to do with the *OUTSTANDING CERA DIFFERENTIAL* seasons for a Backup Catcher and what happened the next year. For example, A.J. Pierzynski (Min) had a CERA*

DIFF in 1998 of -2.318 (CERA of 2.432 and TERA of 4.750) while Terry Steinbach had a positive CERA differential (higher than team ERA). The next year A.J. had increased playing time and Steinbach's games caught were down. This continued until Steinbach retired. In effect A.J. stole Terry's job away by virtue of his CERA Differential. (Or so it seems)."

Hope this answers your question regarding my thoughts on the subject. Chuck, Jacksonville, FL"

[PS] Based upon studies by various SABR members, CERA DIFFERENTIAL (good or bad) has absolutely no bearing on a team's Won-Loss record."

Elysian Fields **Quarterly**[®] **THE BASEBALL REVIEW**[™]

Our last edition of e-News we noted that local member **John Nunes** had an article published in *Elysian Fields Quarterly* (October 2002). To learn more about this publication go to the following link http://www.efqreview.com/NewFiles/currentissue_frame.html.

BASEBALL BIOGRAPHY PROJECT... NEW WEB SITE

"For the past few months the Baseball Biography Project has been transitioning to a new web site. I would like to announce that the new site is now "live" at <http://www.bioproj.sabr.org/>.

Some of the old content has been removed and we are still figuring out how to utilize it. The "note" cabinet should be available there soon. All of the important information, for our own writers, for potential writers interested in joining, or for members of the public who want to see the great work we are doing, should be available there.

There will be additional content and functionality available over time. The most important feature of the site is the dissemination of the biographies, which continue apace."

Mark Armour
Director, Baseball Biography Project

THINKING ABOUT THE HOLIDAYS...

HOW ABOUT BASEBALL GREETING CARDS?

A SABR member from Wisconsin, **Dennis Degenhardt**, has started a company that specializes in baseball greeting cards. He has two Holiday Greeting cards that are available through his web site. He's also added other cards, with the most popular being *Today On Your Birthday In Baseball History*. You can check these out at <http://www.baseballgreetingcards.com> or you can contact Dennis at ddd@baseballgreetingcards.com for more information.

SABR DEADBALL ERA COMMITTEE

From **Dan Desrouchers**...if interested in publications by this SABR Committee, you can check out old versions of "The Inside Game" available on the SABR Deadball Era Committee website (<http://world.std.com/~pgw/Deadball/tig.html>).

MORE RE: DEADBALL STARS

We received this note from **Tom Simon** TPSimon@aol.com , Deadball Era Committee Chairman and Editor of "Deadball Stars of the National League:"

"Dear Deadballers,

I'm using SABR Admin's member contact function for only the second time ever to make the following announcement:

At long last, I'm happy to report that draft chapters will be posted for your review in the next 48 hours. An e-mail will follow on how to access the drafts. The book goes to the printer on November 10 so I will need contributors' feedback ASAP.

In other developments, SABR is offering a limited hardcover edition of the book for \$35, but only if we "pre-sell" 127 copies by November 15. The 362-page book with over 200 photos is a bargain at \$35 (the softcover, which you will receive as part of your membership benefits, will sell for \$24.95 in bookstores).

To order, go to SABR's website (www.sabr.org) and click on SABR Store, then click on Books, then click on SABR publications, then scroll down until you see our book. You can also see a mock-up of the book's cover and a more detailed description.

Remember that we need to sell 127 copies by November 15 or the hardcover won't be printed, so please order as many as you can . . . and keep in mind that the Holidays are rapidly approaching and it makes an excellent gift.

*Thanks,
Tom Simon"*