

Society for American Baseball Research



Emil Rothe Chapter - Chicago

Chair: Rich Hansen
Director: Richard Smiley
Treasurer: Peter Yee
Newsletter: David Malamut

April 2009
Volume 3, Edition 2

Chapter website: <http://malamut.net/sabrchicago.html>

The meeting on June 6th at Elfstrom Stadium in Geneva has been cancelled due to lack of interest. Information about the next meeting will be announced on the chapter website and via the mailing list.

Chicago (Emil Rothe) SABR Chapter
April 4, 2009 Meeting Minutes Date:
Saturday April 4, 2009

Location: Eisenhower Public Library, Harwood Heights, IL

Number of Attendees: 28

Trivia Quiz: Abbey Botkin led us through the quiz recently published by George Will in *Newsweek*.

Guest Speakers: R. J. Lesch, who traveled from Adel, IA, discussed and signed copies of the recently published SABR Bio Project book *Go-Go to Glory: The 1959 Chicago White Sox*. Ben Jedlovic of Baseball Info Solutions spoke about John Dewan's recent publication, *The Fielding Bible – Volume II*. Both talks were very well received, and each speaker answered many questions.

Other Presentations: Roger Snell, who traveled from Frankfurt, KY, briefly spoke about his recently published book on Charlie Root entitled *Root for the Cubs: Charlie Root and the 1929 Chicago Cubs*. Roger's brief intro mesmerized the audience, and it is hoped that he will be able to give a more formal presentation of his work later in the year.

Announcements/Requests: Don Sevick handed out materials promoting www.BarryCode.com, a website devoted to the baseball statistics of Barry Codell (who was also present at the meeting). This may be the source of another future presentation at a Chicago SABR meeting. The web site www.todayinbaseball.com was also promoted. A request from Phil Lowry regarding help in identifying long extra-inning amateur games played in Illinois was passed out. An upcoming Chicago Baseball Museum fundraiser was promoted. David Malamut put out a pitch for interest in attending the June 6 Kane County – Peoria game as a group. May 1 was identified as a deadline for arranging with David to get tickets. David also identified June 15 as the deadline for the next newsletter. Dan Helpingstine asked for Cubs fans who would be willing to speak to him about the Cubs-White Sox rivalry. Richard Smiley asked for volunteers to help

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make the old Chicago Base Ball Club records in the Chicago History Museum archives more accessible to those outside Chicago.

Next meeting: We anticipate that a meeting will be scheduled around Gene Carney's upcoming visit to the Chicago History Museum to research recently acquired Black Sox papers.

Minutes prepared by: Richard A. Smiley, April 15, 2009.

SABR Chicago, Baseball Library

The library is open to any researchers who need information. Resources include media guides, programs, yearbooks, almanacs, registers, directories, and much more. If you need something looked up for you, please use the research library for help. For help email David Malamut, david @malamut.net

Also we have duplicates of some books donated to the library earlier in the year. If anyone wants one of these books, please go to the website at <http://malamut.net/collectiondrive.html> to take a look at what is extra. Whatever is not picked up by the end of the year will be donated to the Chicago Public Library.

If you would like to open your collection to researchers, send an email to David, along with what is in your collection. That way we will know who to contact about what.

The chapter website has a members section. If you would like to have a profile on the site, please email David. Include what info you would like in your profile and a picture. [Http://malamut.net/members.html](http://malamut.net/members.html)

The Chicago Chapter newsletter is always looking for researched articles to publish. If you are interested, please email David Malamut.

Request: We need people who remember Emil Rothe to write about their experiences with him and about him for an upcoming newsletter. We are looking for stories and biographies. Remember this newsletter is for you, We will also publish research needs, so if anyone is researching something and needs help please email David and your request will appear in an upcoming newsletter. The deadline for the next newsletter is June 13th, 2009

David Malamut david@malamut.net

05/02/2009 Ken Keltner Chapter (Wisconsin) meets at 11 AM SHARP at Long Wong's Chinese-American Sportsbar, 5230 West Bluemound Road, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Our Guest Speaker will be one of the TV broadcasters for the Arizona Diamondbacks, Daron Sutton.

We will also have a showing of "Bob Uecker: A Baseball Life," a Powerpoint presentation by Bob Buege and Rick Schabowski.

Any one interested in making a presentation can contact Rick Schabowski. If you have any questions????? Feel free to contact Rick. For more information, contact Rick Schabowski [phone: 414-322-4997] [email: RICKIU76@aol.com]

The Society for American Baseball Research (SABR) and Rounder Books is pleased to announce the publication of *Lefty, Double-X, and the Kid: The 1939 Red Sox, A Team in Transition*, edited by Bill Nowlin, with Associate Editors Mark Armour, Maurice Bouchard, and Len Levin.

Why 1939? It was Ted Williams' rookie year, and Bobby Doerr's second. Jimmie Foxx was coming off a 50 home run year and the 1938 batting title. Two other Hall of Famers – Lefty Grove and Joe Cronin – helped anchor the team. It was a year of transition and of hope, emerging from the doldrums that had plagued the Red Sox since 1918 – a stretch that included nine last-place finishes in 16 years, until Tom Yawkey bought the team in 1934 and began to pump money in to prompt a revival.

The team had a slugging Bohemian (Joe Vosmik), a snappy-dressing clothes horse (Broadway Charlie Wagner) and a bonafide espionage agent (Moe Berg), who worked for U.S. intelligence during the Second World War, which was just around the corner. There were an unusual number of interesting characters on the team, and some 19 Society for American Baseball Research authors and editors have combined to present a picture of one of the more colorful Red Sox teams of years gone by in *Lefty, Double-X, and The Kid: The 1939 Red Sox, a Team in Transition* (Rounder Books).

The Baseball Biography Project is an ongoing effort to produce comprehensive biographical articles on every person who ever played or managed in the major leagues, as well as any other person who touched baseball in a significant way. The project is run by the Bioproject Committee of the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR).

Author Bio: Bill Nowlin is author or editor of more than 20 books about Ted Williams and/or the Boston Red Sox, including *Red Sox Threads*, *Blood Feud*, and *Mr. Red Sox: The Johnny Pesky Story*. He has served as Vice President of the Society for American Baseball Research since 2004. Bill is co-founder of Rounder Records of Burlington, Massachusetts.

Just before Opening Day 2009, Baseball-Reference.com launched its newly re-designed site. Now included in the site is the SABR Minor League Database.

The addition of the SABR Minor Leagues database adds about 175,000 players and 4,000 league seasons to Baseball-Reference.com. "SABR is pleased to license Sports Reference LLC this dataset and bring it to the attention of the wider audience on baseball-reference.com" said SABR Executive Director John Zajc. "SABR's mission is to share baseball research information and we felt that providing a license to Sports Reference was a real win-win situation."

Later this year, baseball-reference.com plans to add the Pete Palmer-Gary Gillette historical statistical database, which has powered recent editions of The ESPN Baseball Encyclopedia and is being sub-licensed through SABR. When completed, this will make baseball-reference.com the most accurate online source of historical major league data, another focus of SABR's mission.

Work on improving the SABR Minors Leagues database is continuing as one of SABR's biggest volunteer efforts. Volunteers are needed to compile, cross-check, verify, and fill in the gaps in statistics. To find out more about volunteering, contact the database steering committee at sabrmilb@gmail.com.

Almost a quarter of SABR members who participated in SABR's 2009 Predict the Standings contest chose the Boston Red Sox as the 2009 World Series champions. The New York Yankees received 17.6% of the votes, and the Chicago Cubs had 13.5%.

Division winners, as chosen in the aggregate of more than 370 SABR members are expected to be Boston, Cleveland, Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim, New York Mets, Chicago Cubs, and the Los Angeles Dodgers. Leading vote-getters for the wild card were the Yankees and the Phillies.

SABR voters see a Red Sox-Cubs World Series in 2009. The Mets are the second-leading vote-getter as NL champions, as are the Yankees in the AL, so a Subway Series is not outside the realm of SABR voters' imaginations. Fewer than 2% of voters see a rematch of last year's league champions.

The closest race in the vote totals was the AL Wild Card, with the Yankees and Rays getting the same number of votes. The tie-breaker went to the Yankees because they received more first and second place votes. Other close races were in the National League East, with the Phillies 11 votes behind the Mets, and the American League Central with the Twins 12 votes behind the Indians.

In the National League wild card race, SABR members pretty much agreed it would go to whomever finished second in the East. No club other than the Phillies of the Mets had 10% of the vote for wild card, the Cardinals were the third choice, with 7.6%

For the first time, SABR members were asked to predict the MVPs and Cy Young Award winners from each circuit. In the American League, SABR members see a two-man race for MVP between the Yankees' Mark Teixeira (15.6%) and the Indians' Grady Sizemore (13.6%). Other leading vote-getters were Kevin Youkilis of Boston (9.1%), and Derek Jeter of New York, Evan Longoria of Tampa Bay, and Justin Morneau of Minnesota (tied with 6.8%).

CC Sabathia dominated the SABR voters the way the Yankees hope he will dominate AL batters this season, garnering 34.5% of the votes. Other contenders for the Cy Young are Toronto's Roy Halladay (15.4%), and Boston's Josh Beckett (9.5%) and Jon Lester (8.2%).

Albert Pujols of St. Louis dominated the National League MVP predictions, garnering 28.8% of the vote. Mets third baseman David Wright (16.2%) and Dodgers outfielder Manny Ramirez (15.9%) battled for second, and Ryan Howard of the defending champion Phillies (7.1%) was the only other player to get more than 5% of the vote.

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Johan Santana, the Mets' high-priced pitching acquisition of the 2007-08 off-season, is expected to win the NY Cy Young by 30.1% of SABR voters. Other contenders are San Francisco's Tim Lincecum (14.6%), Philadelphia's Cole Hamels (13.2%) and Chicago's Carlos Zambrano (5.6%).

The SABR Deadball Era Committee is pleased to announce that Ronald M. Selter's Ballparks of the Deadball Era (McFarland) has been named the winner of the 2009 Larry Ritter Award, given to best new book related to the Deadball Era published in the previous year. Selter's meticulously researched study covered every ballpark used during the Deadball Era and explained how changes in ballpark configurations affected outcomes on the field. It will remain the definitive work in this area for a long time to come. The award will be presented at the committee meeting at the convention in Washington, D.C.

Three other books gained considerable support in the balloting and are designated as Finalists for the award. They are:

1) Rick Huhn's Eddie Collins (McFarland), a comprehensive biography of the Hall of Fame second baseman and longtime executive. 2) Tom Swift's Chief Bender's Burden (University of Nebraska), a creatively woven biography of the Hall of Fame pitcher. 3) Michael Lynch's Harry Frazee, Ban Johnson, and the Feud That Nearly Destroyed the American League (McFarland), an untangling of the complex power struggle that marked the end of the Deadball Era.

Committee members:

Gabriel Schechter,
Chairman Anthony Basich
Al Blumkin Jack Carlson
Gene Carney Mark Dugo
Scott Flatow David Fleitz
Craig Lammers Mark
Pattison

The Society for American Baseball Research (SABR) is pleased to announce that *Chief Bender's Burden: The Silent Struggle of a Baseball Star*, by Tom Swift (University of Nebraska Press), has been named the winner of the 2009 Seymour Medal. In *Chief Bender's Burden*, Swift provides a nuanced, novel-like biography of Charles Albert Bender, the first Native American to play in the American League and one of only two Native Americans in the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Born in 1884 to an Ojibwe Indian mother and a German-American father, Bender spent his early years on the White Earth Reservation. Swift chronicles Bender's development at the Carlisle Indian School and his big break and eventual rise to the pinnacle of baseball. *Chief Bender's Burden* is the story of a paradoxical American sports hero, one who achieved a once-unfathomable celebrity while suffering the harsh injustices of a racially intolerant world.

Swift will receive the medal at the Seymour Medal Conference in Cleveland, April 24-26. Noted sports columnist and Cleveland native Joe Posnanski will be the keynote speaker. The Seymour Medal Conference takes place at the Radisson Hotel at Gateway, however, the opening reception for the conference will include a reading by Swift at The Lit (The Artcraft Building, 2570 Superior, Suite 203). The reception and reading begins at 7:00 p.m. and is free and open to the public.

The Seymour Medal, named in honor of Dr. Harold Seymour and Dorothy Jane Mills (Seymour), is awarded each spring to the best book of baseball biography or history published in the previous calendar year. In addition to *Chief Bender's Burden*, the other finalists for this year's award were *The Father of Baseball: A Biography of Henry Chadwick* by Andrew J. Schiff (McFarland) and *Ed Barrow: The Bulldog Who Built the Yankees First Dynasty* by Daniel R. Levitt (University of Nebraska Press). This year's Seymour Medal Committee members included Peter Buckingham, Ron Kaplan, and Jon Daniels. The Seymour Medal Conference is presented with the support of the Cleveland Indians Baseball Club.

Tom Swift is an award-winning journalist, a freelance writer, and a member of the Society for American Baseball Research. He and his wife live in Minnesota.