

# The Casey Stengel Chapter Newsletter

## The Lineup

Volume 2 Number 2

March/April 2025

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### Note to Readers

This April/May issue concentrates on the Minor Leagues and on Scouts, both of which are crucial for baseball to thrive! Chapter members, especially our newer ones, are not always aware of the continually great work done by SABR researchers and we try to highlight one area of SABR's Research Committees in each issue. For this newsletter, **two** themes are explored and one person – Roland Hemond. Hemond shared his experience and knowledge with everyone and showed just how valuable the minor leagues are, as well as just how treasured scouts should be regarded, both for the minor leagues and the majors.

## Why the Minor Leagues?

The Minor Leagues Research Committee was one of SABR's original three committees, along with the Biography and the Negro Leagues Committees. As such, the minor leagues will be highlighted in this issue. There have been wide-ranging changes recently, which is another reason we are looking at the minors. Although there is now a streamlined system of MLB-affiliated teams in the minor leagues, there are local independent baseball teams in leagues around the world; this issue will include just the greater NYC area teams.

### The Structure of the Minor Leagues

After the 2020 season, changes were made by MLB that resulted in reducing by roughly 25% the existing minor league teams. The 30 MLB teams chose one affiliate at each of the four minor league levels, leaving more than 40 teams which lost their MLB affiliation.

The current divisions in the minors are **Triple-A** (International League and Pacific Coast League), **Double-A** (Eastern League, Southern League, and Texas League), **High-A** (Midwest League, Northwest League, and the South Atlantic League) and **Single-A** (California League, Carolina League, and Florida State League). Each of the 4 levels has 30 teams, totaling 120. Two examples shown here are the minor league divisions for the Mets and the Yankees.

#### THE NEW YORK METS' TEAMS IN THE MINOR LEAGUES

Triple-A



Syracuse Mets

Double-A



Binghamton Rumble Ponies

High-A



Brooklyn Cyclones

Single-A



St. Lucie Mets

## THE NEW YORK YANKEES' TEAMS IN THE MINOR LEAGUES

Triple-A



Double-A



High-A



Single-A



Scranton/Wilkes-Barre RailRiders   Somerset Patriots   Hudson Valley Renegades   Tampa Tarpons

Three leagues (Arizona Complex, Florida Complex, and Dominican Summer) comprise the Rookie League which has a short season from early May to late July.

In addition, an Arizona Fall League of only six teams plays about 30 games during the fall season. Certain players, usually from the minors, are invited to work on improving their skills. Major League Baseball monitors this league, unlike other leagues that play fall or winter baseball outside the US mainland.

Roland Hemond is credited with having the idea for a type of league like the AFL during a 1991 General Managers meeting, proposing a league in Arizona which has baseball weather all year round and the AFL began in 1992. More on Mr. Hemond later in this newsletter.

## MLB Partner Leagues

Many teams do play without an affiliation with a specific Major League team and some even have a partnership with MLB. The independent Frontier League is an official MLB Partner League and even has a built-in rivalry between the New Jersey Jackals



(Paterson, NJ) and the Sussex County Miners (Augusta, NJ) with a three-way competition if the New York Boulders (Pomona, NY) play a New Jersey team!



Two independent teams in NY State are the Long Island Ducks (Central Islip, Long Island, NY) and the Staten Island FerryHawks. Both are in the Atlantic League which is an official MLB Partner.

Besides the Frontier and Atlantic Leagues, the other two MLB Partner Leagues are the American Association and the Pioneer League. The Atlantic League usually has the best attendance of any independent team and is the third-highest in gross revenues, behind the International League and the Pacific Coast League, both of which are at the Triple-A level of the Minor Leagues. The Frontier League is next highest in gross revenue (4<sup>th</sup> in professional baseball)!

The MLB Draft League has a hybrid structure: before the MLB draft in July, it functions as a collegiate summer baseball league when prospects who have amateur status can show their best; after the draft, the league continues playing games but can now include paid professional players. The Trenton Thunder is an example of such a team.



Two SABR committees that have a natural relationship are the Minor Leagues Research Committee and the Scouts Research Committee. This newsletter will explore both. One commonly cited statistic by scouts is that only 5% of prospective baseball players that they see in schools or the minor leagues will eventually make it to the majors. One scout spent an entire year with one MLB team but found no one to recommend!

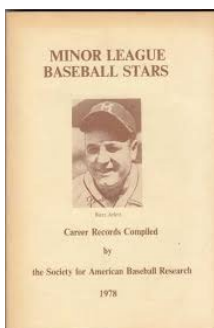
## SABR's Minor Leagues Research Committee

The Minor Leagues Committee is one of three research committees that began in 1971 when the Society of American Baseball Research first started. The other two were Biographical and Negro Leagues and each of the three original committees have a section at <https://sabr.org/history/original-research-committees/>. The Minor Leagues Committee “studies and gathers data on the minor leagues.”

Chairs have included Ray Nemec, Vern Luse, Bob Hoie, John Pardon, David Kemp, Jamie Selko, Carlos Bauer, Ernest Green, Bob McConnell, Kurt Bloeser, John Schleppi, Kevin McCann, Jonathan Dunkle, Joe Wanch, Joe Werner, and George Pawlusch. In 2025, Jack V. Morris assumed the chair.

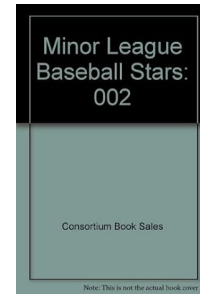
The committee has published “three volumes of *Minor League Baseball Stars*, three volumes of the *Minor League History Journal*, two volumes of the *Minor League Baseball Research Journal*, and *The SABR Guide to Minor League Statistics*. No minor league, no matter how small or insignificant, has escaped the scrutiny of the committee.” Most of these publications can be found here <https://sabr.org/research/minor-leagues-research-committee/>.

In 1978, the first volume of *Minor League Baseball Stars* was published by

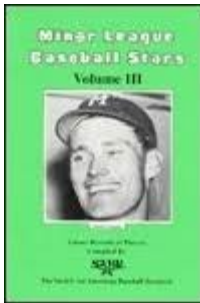


SABR. It had profiles of about 175 players including Joe Bauman, Steve Bilko, Steve Dalkowski, Bud Fowler, *Tony Freitas*, *Pete Gray*, Joe Hauser, Smead Jolley, *Muscle Shoals*, Jigger Statz, Jim Thorpe, Moses Walker, and Chuck Workman. Players in *italics* have interviews and biography pages in this newsletter (p. 9-10).

In 1985, a second volume of Minor League Baseball Stars was published, again with about 175 players. Some of them were Ray Dandridge, *Steve Demeter*, Luke Easter, *George Fisher*, *Al Mele*, *Jim Walkup*, and *Jimmy Zinn*. Players in *italics* have interviews and biography pages in this newsletter (p. 9-10).



In 1992, In 1985, a third volume of Minor League Baseball Stars was published about 255 players, some of whom had been explored in earlier volumes.



Frank Stephan "Ping" Bodie, *Arthur Bowland, Jr.*, *Joseph John Brovia*, Kevin Joseph Aloysius "Chuck" Connors, Pearl Zane Grey, *Stanley Aaron Wentzel*, Solomon "Sol" White, *Adrian Zabala (Rodriguez)*. Players in *italics* have interviews and biography pages in this newsletter (p. 9-10).

The three editions of what was originally called *The Guide to the Guides* — a comprehensive recording of *where to find* published minor-league player and team statistics — that cover the minor league seasons 1887-2006 can be downloaded here <https://sabr.org/research/minor-leagues-research-committee/>.

There is also a link to the *SABR Guide to Minor League Statistics, 3rd edition*. On the same page (in red print) is a link to click for your free digital copy of the Minor League History Journal.

The most recent publication, *When Minor League Baseball Almost Went Bust: 1946 – 1963*, was published in January 2025. Former Minor Leagues Research Committee Chairman George Pawlusch hopes that this will be the first of a series in the years ahead!

You can enjoy all these publications (free downloads) just by visiting <https://sabr.org/research/minor-leagues-research-committee/>.

## Oral Interviews and Written Biographies

These ballplayers spent most of their time in the minor leagues yet also had short stints in the majors on at least one New York team, and many interviews here include biographies as well.

**Art Bowland** (Unknown interview date)

<https://sabr.org/interview/art-bowland-unknown/> includes Bowland meeting Branch Rickey and playing for the Brooklyn Bushwicks.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brooklyn\\_Bushwicks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brooklyn_Bushwicks)

Interviewee: Bowland, Art

Interview Date: Unknown

Interviewer: Wheeler, Herman

The biography page brings you to: [https://www.baseball-reference.com/bullpen/Art\\_Bowland](https://www.baseball-reference.com/bullpen/Art_Bowland)

**Sam Gibson** (Unknown interview date)

<https://sabr.org/interview/sam-gibson-unknown/> includes giving up Cobb's 4,000<sup>th</sup> hit and never striking out Joe Sewell (who once went 115 consecutive games without a strikeout).

Interviewee: Gibson, Sam

Interview Date: Unknown

Interviewer: Harville, Charles

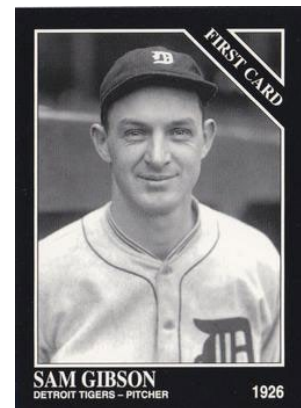
**This bio is not assigned.** Want to write a SABR bio?

Contact [bioproject@sabr.org](mailto:bioproject@sabr.org)

Stats: [Baseball Reference](#), [Retrosheet](#), [Oral History](#)

You can also read more at

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sam\\_Gibson\\_\(baseball\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sam_Gibson_(baseball))



Pete Gray, a one-armed major league ballplayer, was featured in *Minor League Baseball Stars, volume I* and seldom gave interviews so this one done by Steve Svetovich, is unique. The movie referred to during the interview was shown on TV in 1986 and called *A Winner Never Quits*, based on Gray's life.



**Pete Gray** (1989)

<https://sabr.org/interview/pete-gray-1989/>

Interviewee: Gray, Pete

Interview Date: 4/1/1989

Interviewer: Svetovich, Steve

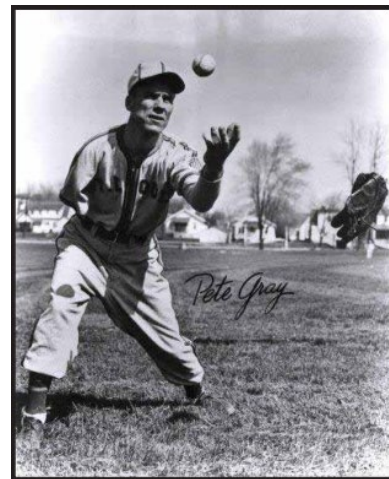
This interview by Steve Svetovich originally aired on Ron Allen's "Sportsline" show on WARM radio in Scranton, Pennsylvania, in April 1989.

Enjoy this article by Mel Marmer! <https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/Pete-Gray/>

You can also read more at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pete\\_Gray](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pete_Gray)

Gray's lifelong dream came true by playing in Yankee Stadium. In the minors, Gray went 7-for-7 in a doubleheader (but then got lifted for pinch hitter!). He mentioned that he played in Canada 5 times and talked about the Brooklyn Bushwicks, too.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brooklyn\\_Bushwicks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brooklyn_Bushwicks)



**Adrian Zabala** (1994)

<https://sabr.org/interview/adrian-zabala-1994/>

Interviewee: Zabala, Adrian

Interview Date: 6/3/1994

Interviewer: Kelley, Brent

**This bio is not assigned.** Want to write a SABR bio?

Contact [bioproject@sabr.org](mailto:bioproject@sabr.org)

Stats: [Baseball Reference](#), [Retrosheet](#), [Oral History](#)

You can also read more at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adri%C3%A1n\\_Zabala](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adri%C3%A1n_Zabala)

Zabala had two brief seasons playing for the NY Giants (he mostly stayed in Jersey City (NY Giants minor leagues) so his interview includes statements about Sal Maglie, Danny Gardella, Carl Hubbell, and top reliever Ace Adams as well as comments about Leo Durocher.



More Oral History Committee interviews and biographies from the BioProject Committee about (mostly) Minor League players are here:

**Joe Brovia** (1989)

<https://sabr.org/interview/joe-brovia-1989/> by Brent Kelley

Enjoy this article by Jim Sargent! <https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/joe-brovia/>

You can also read more at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joe\\_Brovia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joe_Brovia)



**Steve Demeter** (1991)

<https://sabr.org/interview/steve-demeter-1991/> by Brent Kelley

**This bio is not assigned.** Want to write a SABR bio?

Contact [bioproject@sabr.org](mailto:bioproject@sabr.org)

Stats: [Baseball Reference](#), [Retrosheet](#), [Oral History](#)

You can also read more at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steve\\_Demeter](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steve_Demeter)

**George “Showboat” Fisher** (1992)

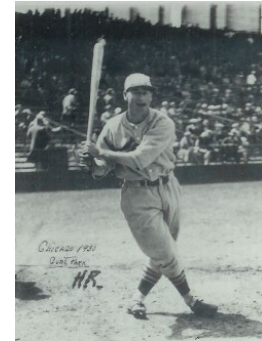
<https://sabr.org/interview/george-showboat-fisher-1992/> by Rick Bradley

**This bio is not assigned.** Want to write a SABR bio?

Contact [bioproject@sabr.org](mailto:bioproject@sabr.org)

Stats: [Baseball Reference](#), [Retrosheet](#), [Oral History](#)

You can also read more at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Showboat\\_Fisher](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Showboat_Fisher)



**Tony Freitas** (Unknown interview date)

<https://sabr.org/interview/tony-freitas-unknown/> by Gerald Tomlinson

Enjoy this article by Len Pasculli! <https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/Tony-Freitas/>

You can also read more at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tony\\_Freitas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tony_Freitas)

**Sam Mele** (Unknown)

<https://sabr.org/interview/sam-mele-unknown/>

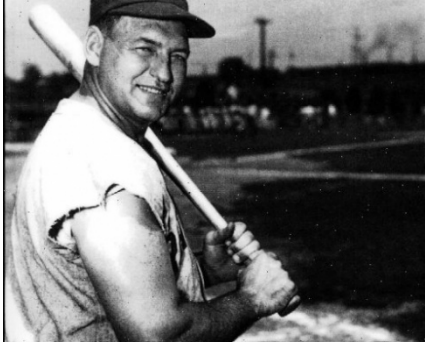
Interviewee: Mele, Sam

Interviewer: Frommer, Harvey

Enjoy this article by Bill Nowlin! <https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/Sam-Mele/>

**Mele is also listed under “Scouts” in the Oral History Committee categories at the bottom of its home webpage.**





**Leo “Muscle” Shoals** (Unknown interview date)  
<https://sabr.org/interview/leo-muscle-shoals-unknown/> by Charles Harville

This brings you to: <https://www.baseball-reference.com/register/player.fcgi?id=shoals001leo>

You can also read more at

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leo\\_Shools](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leo_Shools) where you will learn his birth name: “Lloyd Cleveland "Muscle" Sholes Jr. (October 3, 1916 – February 23, 1999) was an American baseball player who was sometimes called "the Babe Ruth of the minor leagues....A muscular 220-pounder, Shoals quickly established himself as a formidable slugger, earning him the nickname "Muscle Shoals" after the northern Alabama town by that name.”

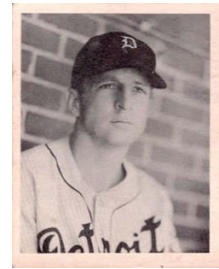
**Jim Walkup** (1993)

<https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/Jim-Walkup/> by Rick Bradley

Enjoy this article by Gregory H. Wolf <https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/Jim-Walkup/>

You can also read more at

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jim\\_Walkup\\_\(right-handed\\_pitcher\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jim_Walkup_(right-handed_pitcher))



**Stan Wentzel** (1973)

<https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/Stan-Wentzel/> by Kit Crissey

**This bio is not assigned.** Want to write a SABR bio?

Contact [bioproject@sabr.org](mailto:bioproject@sabr.org)

Stats: [Baseball Reference](#), [Retrosheet](#), [Oral History](#)

You can also read more at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stan\\_Wentzel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stan_Wentzel)

**Jimmy Zinn** (1989)

<https://sabr.org/interview/jimmy-zinn-1989/> by Mark Bernstein

Enjoy this article by Stephen V. Rice

<https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/Jimmy-Zinn/>

You can also read more at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jimmy\\_Zinn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jimmy_Zinn)



The SABR Minor League committee newsletter, *Beating the Bushes*, <https://sabr.org/research/minor-leagues-research-committee-newsletters/> has published articles like these (Note – Excerpts are included from each piece):

- **The Slaying of Minor Leaguer Art Brown: The Deadball Era's Love Triangle Homicide** by **Bill Lamb**

"In a seedy Albany rooming house on the evening of June 15, 1911, minor league first baseman Art Brown was fatally shot by the husband of the woman seated on Brown's lap. The following day, the incident became front page newspaper fodder, replete with graphic detail."

- **We Know Who You Are** by **Terry Bohn**

"Some minor league ball players played under assumed names, or aliases, for many reasons. They may have been college players who used a different name while making money with a professional nine in the summer. Some were contract jumpers who hoped to avoid a blacklist from Organized Baseball by signing a contract using another name elsewhere. Others may have tried to hide the fact that they were ball players, while a few were trying to stay a step ahead of the law. For others, no reason has been discovered as to why they decided to use an alias. The following are a few examples of players ... using a name other than their own."

- **Eddie Yasinski** by **Don Dingee**

"The hamlet of Stottville in upstate New York isn't exactly a hotbed for professional baseball players, yet it was there that the Brooklyn Dodgers found Edward Paul Yasinski. After a brief stint in the U. S. Navy, Eddie proved himself a versatile and durable arm for several Dodger farm clubs in the first eight of his nine seasons in the minors starting in 1947. He was a rising prospect attending the epic 1948 opening of Dodgertown, immortalized in a headshot before heading off for the Canadian-American League. A pivotal 1951 campaign paired him atop a Pueblo rotation with a better-known rural Hudson Valley pitcher. He returned to his native New York for three seasons in Elmira and one more in Albany, capping his pro career. In one last shining summer in 1958, he became a sensation in the fleeting semi-pro New York-New Jersey Baseball League."

- **Mets pitcher tames Tigers twenty times** by **Chad Osborne**

"What if I told you a Marion Mets pitcher struck out 20 batters in a single game on a hot, sweaty August night at Marion Stadium? Could you name the pitcher? ... That's what [Ed] Burgy did when the Bristol (Va.) Tigers came to town. It wasn't long after the 7:45 p.m. first pitch that the Mets' ace, wearing jersey No. 33, recorded his first K of the night. "He was locked in," recalled Larry Berra, Burgy's catcher for the game nearly 52 years ago. Nothing distracted Burgy that night."

- **The Dawn of the Dodgers** by **Clifford Blau**

"In Brooklyn, New York, George Taylor, a newspaper editor, began organizing a professional club, which Brooklyn, third-most populous city in the country, had been lacking for the past few years. His first step was in securing grounds, leasing land between Fourth and Fifth Avenues and Third and Fifth Streets, formerly the site of the Washington Skating Park and before that a Revolutionary War battle. When his initial investor backed out, Taylor's lawyer connected him

with real estate man Charles Byrne, who in turn brought in his brother-in-law, Joseph Doyle. Construction of the ball field began during the winter, and when the work proved more expensive than expected, Doyle turned to Ferdinand Abell to join the ownership. Byrne, Doyle, and Abell would be the principal owners of the club until Byrne's death in 1898. Construction of the buildings and fences at what was to be known as Washington Park was begun in March, and was completed in early May.”



**Washington Park, Brooklyn, June 26, 1897**

Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division  
[reproduction number, LC-USZC2-4556]  
Gottsocho-Schleisner Collection

SABR’s Minor League Committee <http://research.sabr.org/minors/> works with many other SABR research committees to integrate information for the benefit of both members and non-members. Among its various projects are:

- Continuing the “database project to build the first comprehensive online compilation of historical Minor League statistics.” See updates at <https://sabr.org/research/historical-minor-league-statistics/>
- Collaborating with the Chadwick Baseball Bureau (CBB) <https://www.chadwick-bureau.com/> to verify dates of deaths, clarify 19<sup>th</sup> century players with similar or identical names, and add information. See <https://www.chadwick-bureau.com/doc/historical/>
- Integrating minor league information and statistics with Baseball-Reference, as can be seen here <https://www.baseball-reference.com/register/index.fcgi>
- Cross-checking the Weiss Questionnaires with the contract cards collected by The Sporting News to complete player background data.

The Minor League Box Scores Project builds “on work that was initially done by some SABR members for The Chadwick Bureau, transcribing box scores

for minor league seasons so that individual and team stats can be calculated” which is described by Minor League Committee Newsletter Editor Chuck McGill as “a kind of Retrosheet for the minor leagues, albeit without play-by-play for every game. Eventually, we intend to add play-by-play info for those games for which we can find it. As part of the project, we’re also collecting game logs that members have compiled, along with seasonal compilations, team rosters, play-by-play accounts, unpublished averages, and league schedules (most have already been collected).” McGill welcomes any member interested in helping with box scores. Go to <https://sabrgroups.org/g/minorsboxscores> .



### Historical Location for Staten Island Baseball Parks

The Staten Island FerryHawks (in today’s Atlantic League) play home games in a ballpark with a “Wall of Fame” dedicated to Baseball Scouts (on the 3<sup>rd</sup> base concourse).

Just past left field, outside the park, is a September 11<sup>th</sup> Memorial called *Postcards* to honor the 263 Staten Island residents who died that day and also the first responders who died afterwards from the toxicity of that environment. The photos below are taken from <https://www.911memorial.org/connect/blog/sharing-memorials-registry-postcards-2004-staten-island-ny>

The parking lot today is where the New York Metropolitans of the American Association once played (at the St. George Grounds) in 1886–1887 and the New York Giants also played there for several weeks in early 1889 (until the Polo Grounds II construction was done).





## SABR's Scouts Research Committee

Baseball scouts are generally unrecognized by most fans yet somehow, we do have a kind of unspoken appreciation for them because so many of us watch baseball *with the eyes and instincts of a scout!* We marvel at a player's speed, at the power, throwing arm, defensive anticipation, the pitcher's repertoire, control in clutch situations and we evaluate players beyond their numbers on the scoreboard. Then, like so many other fans, we compare players!

The Scouts Research Committee <https://sabr.org/research/scouts-research-committee/> was formed in 1994 to compile a complete roster of scouts, including their biographical and career information, and a list of the ballplayers they signed. Early pioneers in these efforts such as Jim Kreuz, Carlos Bauer, Steve Lamar, and others were greatly helped when, around that time, Roland Hemond joined SABR. Hemond was able to harness his relationships within baseball to assist the accurate acquisition of scouting information: he had been a scouting director in 1961 (for the Angels), a director of player personnel (for the White Sox) and a general manager for the White Sox and the Orioles. As an executive for the Braves, the Angels, the White Sox, and the Diamondbacks, he recruited colleagues to spread the word of the need for scouting statistics and history to be sent to SABR.

The Scout Research Committee had, *and still has*, many contributors who are not publicly known the way Roland was, but committee chair John Pardon (one of SABR's original 16 founders) did acknowledge that Hemond "has become our most valuable and active major league executive – a man vitally interested in the past, present, and future of scouting" in the committee's second newsletter.

The next committee chairman, Bill Clark, called him "the best friend scouts have in baseball. His dedication to the scouts' exhibit in Cooperstown leads the rest of us." Hemond had submitted several hundred scout signings (mainly the

“Who-Signed-Whom”) to the committee and “prompted a number of scouts with whom he had worked thru the years to submit their own lists.” Clark himself was a scout and said Hemond was “the best friend scouts have in baseball. His dedication to the scouts’ exhibit in Cooperstown leads the rest of us.”

When you go to the SABR Oral History Research Committee web page here <https://sabr.org/oralhistory>, you can scroll to the bottom and see “Browse by Tags” where one Tag is “Scouts” <https://sabr.org/tag/scout/> and Bill Clark is there.



**Bill Clark (2002)**

<https://sabr.org/interview/bill-clark-2002/>

Interviewee: Clark, Bill

Interview Date: 6/28/2002

Interviewer: Paulson, Dave

Enjoy this article by Bill Nowlin!

<https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/bill-clark/>

During his leadership, Clark created the Roland Hemond Award to be given to “the major league executive who is most active in the archiving of the history of scouting” by the Scouts Committee. Since 2001, when Hemond was the first recipient, the annual award has gone to a baseball executive who has made significant contributions to the scouting community. You can see the list (through 2025) here: <https://sabr.org/about/awards>

By 2005, the committee newsletter editor, Bill Clark, who was himself a scout, noted “SABR owes a world of thanks to Roland for what he has done regarding research of the scouting world. Scouts owe him a world of thanks because he has always been one of a small handful of executives who truly have cared about the scouts. He has worn two hats with class. Live to be 100, Roland. The game – and SABR – need you.”



In May of 2005, the Scouts Committee co-chairs Jim Sandoval and Rod Nelson named the newsletter “20 To 80” which refers to the MLB scale that scouts use between 20 and 80 <https://www.80scale.com/about/80-scale-defined/51258> when grading a prospect. Using increments of 5, a prospect’s score can be:

20-30: Well below average.  
40: Below average.  
50: Average.  
60: Above average.  
70-80: Well above average.

A score of 65 or higher indicates a player who will probably have a strong future in the majors, maybe even becoming an All-Star.



### **Hugh “Red” Alexander (1991)**

During Bill Clark’s oral interview in 2002, he cited Hugh Alexander as one of the best scouts ever. The OHC interview below is more than 3 ½ hours of fascinating experiences shared by Alexander who scouted for 54 years! He said he began at age 20 (!?! ) when MLB had only 23 scouts.

Interviewee: Alexander, Hugh

Interview Date: 1991-11-29

Interviewer: Austin, Dan

Enjoy this article by Brian Flaspohler!

<https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/hugh-alexander/>

**Sources** -In addition to the sources cited in the Notes, the author accessed Baseball-Reference.com, Ancestry.com, and Newspapers.com.

Jim Sandoval and Rod Nelson included *Profiles* of scouts into the committee newsletter and the October 2006 *Scouts in the News* one memorably had this:

### **SCOUTS IN THE NEWS**

It is with great sadness that we mark the passing of seven members of the scouting fraternity in the past quarter. John Jordan “Buck” O’Neil, the former Kansas City Monarch player-manager best known as the ambassador for the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum was the first black major league coach and a longtime scout for the Chicago Cubs and Kansas City Royals. Buck is credited for the signings of George Altman, Lou Brock, Joe Carter, Oscar Gamble, Lou Johnson, Donnie Moore, Lee Smith

among others. After passing away October 6<sup>th</sup>, Major League Baseball offered a moment of silence in his memory during each postseason series and thousands lined up to pay their respects while his body lay in repose at the NLBM. SABR Scouts Committee member Keith Olbermann offers this video tribute. <http://msnbc.msn.com/id/15208545>

### **Buck O'Neil (1996)**

<https://sabr.org/interview/buck-oneil-1996/>

Interviewee: O'Neil, Buck

Interview Date: 1996-06-26



Buck O'Neil's speech at SABR 26 convention, Kansas City, 1996. Transcribed by Lucinda Baker (2018). There is also a PDF of O'Neil's speech.

Enjoy this article by Bob LeMoine! <https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/Buck-O'Neil/>

For more to read about Buck O'Neil, see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buck\\_O%27Neil](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buck_O%27Neil)



### **Buck O'Neil (2000)**

<https://sabr.org/interview/buck-oneil-2000/>

Interviewee: O'Neil, Buck

Interview Date: 8/22/2000

Interviewer: Vincent, Fay

Part of this interview allows O'Neil to explain how Cool Papa Bell actually did fool Satchel Paige into believing Bell really could be in bed before the light switch went dark!

Enjoy this article by Bob LeMoine! <https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/Buck-O'Neil/>

There is also a PDF of the interview.

In 2007, the Scouts Research Committee honored its former chair, Bill Clark, with the Roland Hemond Award for “meritorious service to the scouting profession.” Hemond himself presented the award.

From the beginning, the Scouts Research Committee worked on publications about scouts and building a database. Sandoval and SABR's board member Bill Nowlin shepherded for many years the research into what would become *Can He Play? A Look At Baseball Scouts and Their Profession*, a collection of biographies, interviews, and historical essays by 26 SABR contributors which was published in 2011 and is free to download here <https://sabr.org/research/scouts-research-committee/>.

Roland Hemond wrote the Foreword and here is part of what Jim Sandoval wrote about scouts in the Introduction:

They dig through tons of coal to find a single diamond. They spend countless hours traveling miles and miles on lonely back roads and way too much time in hotels. Their front offices expect them to constantly provide player reports and updates. So much of their time is spent away from family and friends, missing birthdays, anniversaries, and holidays. Their best friend is Rand McNally. Always asking the question, “*CAN HE PLAY?*” Such is the life of a professional scout.

In 2013, the committee’s two primary database projects — the Who-Signed-Whom Database and the Scouts Register — were chosen as “the foundation of the online Diamond Mines exhibit which was underwritten by the Scout of the Year Foundation and is hosted by the National Baseball Hall of Fame. The exhibit displays thousands of amateur and professional scouting reports and will remain a perpetual work-in-progress.”

Journalist Travis Sawchik wrote a mind-opening account of scouts called “How to find a ballplayer: Lessons from two of the best scouts of all time” after he attended SABR’s 2015 convention. “At the Society for American Baseball Research conference in Chicago ... I learned [that] SABR's scouting committee chair Rod Nelson, co-chair Jason Sigler, and his research team from Ohio State University have linked nearly every major-league player since 1950 with the scout who signed them.” Read <https://www.thescore.com/mlb/news/2862167/how-to-find-a-ballplayer-lessons-from-two-of-the-best-scouts-of-all-time>.

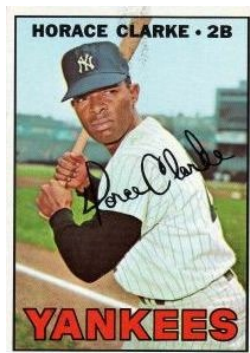
Part of the story included Sabermetrics such as Wins Above Replacement when ranking scouts like Bill MacKenzie, considered the most efficient scout *still living* – his 10 signees averaged 33.5 WAR in their MLB careers. Other Scouting

legends were included in the piece and the 25 top scouts are in SABR's database based on total WAR for players who debuted since 1950, thanks to the Scouts Research Committee, led by Rod Nelson and co-chair Jason Sigler.

The most recent effort to acknowledge the work that scouts do is *Baseball's Endangered Species: Inside the Craft of Scouting by Those Who Lived It*, an insightful book by Lee Lowenfish whose five-page essay in the Scouts Committee newsletter of 2009 surprised many with this excerpt [sentence in **bold**]:

It is a tough job and signings that don't pan out are more common than successes. "Don't be afraid to be wrong," Atlanta Braves scout Hep Cronin advises. "You won't become a real scout until you miss on some guys." **Even Branch Rickey, who coined the term "dollar sign on the muscle," once stunned a confident young scout when he said that he understood no more than 55% of the game.** Yet you don't give up, you keep looking out for the diamonds in the rough in the middle and lower rounds of the amateur draft that all agree are the true measure of a scout's acumen.

Here are interviews and articles on scouting taken from SABR's Oral History Committee and the BioProject Committee. Of the 23 interviewees on the OHC "Scouts" webpages (some gave multiple interviews), *more than half of them* either played with or scouted for a New York team. Prior issues of The Lineup included Carl Hubbell and Eddie Lopat so they are not repeated here nor is Sam Mele whose interview and bio are on page 9 in this issue. Below are the other scouts who played or scouted for a New York team. Enjoy!



**Horace Clarke** (1991) – Yankees 1965-74

<https://sabr.org/interview/horace-clarke-1991/>

Interviewee: Clarke, Horace

Interview Date: 7/26/1991

Interviewer: Bergman, Irwin

Enjoy this article by Rory Costello!

<https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/Horace-Clarke/>

More here [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horace\\_Clarke](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horace_Clarke)



**Al Gionfriddo** (Unknown Interview Date) – Dodgers 1941

<https://sabr.org/interview/al-gionfriddo-unknown/>

Interviewee: Gionfriddo, Al

Interview Date:

Interviewer: Tomlinson, Gerald

Enjoy this article by Rory Costello!

<https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/Al-Gionfriddo/>

More here [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al\\_Gionfriddo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al_Gionfriddo)

**Angelo Giuliani** (2001) – Dodgers 1940-41

<https://sabr.org/interview/tony-giuliani-2001/>

Interviewee(s): Giuliani, Angelo

Interview Date: 2001-06-08

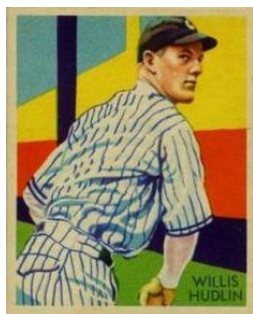
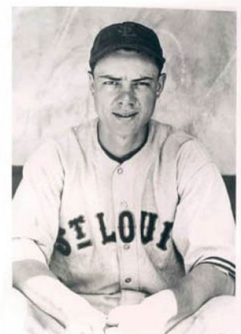
Interviewer(s): Baldassaro, Lawrence

This interview was recorded for the author's books *Baseball Italian Style* and *Beyond DiMaggio* on Italian-American participation in baseball.

Used by permission. Visit [baseballitalianstyle.com](http://baseballitalianstyle.com) to learn more.

Enjoy this article by Rex Hamann! <https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/tony-giuliani/>

More here [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tony\\_Giuliani](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tony_Giuliani)



**Willis Hudlin** (1982) – 1960-74 Yankee scout

<https://sabr.org/interview/willis-hudlin-1982/>

Interviewee: Hudlin, Willis

Interview Date: 6/23/1982

Interviewer: Langford, Walter

Enjoy this article was written by Stephen V. Rice

<https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/Willis-Hudlin/>

More here [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Willis\\_Hudlin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Willis_Hudlin)

**Luis Olmo** (1992) – 1943-45, 1949 Dodgers & 2<sup>nd</sup> Puerto Rican in MLB

<https://sabr.org/interview/luis-olmo-1992/>

Interviewee: Olmo, Luis

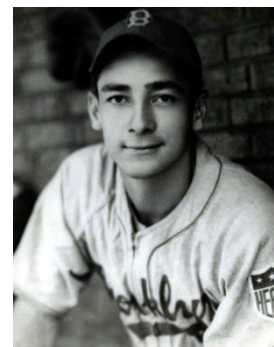
Interview Date: 8/6/1992

Interviewer: Otto, Frank

Enjoy this article by Rory Costello!

<https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/Luis-Olmo/>

More here [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luis\\_Olmo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luis_Olmo)





**Connie Ryan** (1973) – **Giants** 1942  
<https://sabr.org/interview/connie-ryan-1973/>

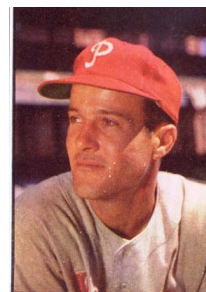
Interviewee: Ryan, Connie

Interview Date: 7/10/1973

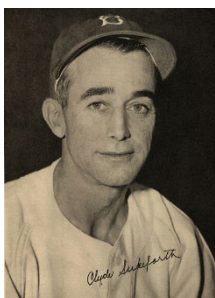
Interviewer: Crissey, Kit

This article was written by [John McMurray](#)  
<https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/Connie-Ryan/>

More here [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Connie\\_Ryan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Connie_Ryan)



**Clyde Sukeforth** (1994) – **Dodgers** 1932-34 & 1945 (player); 1943-51 (coach); **1937-42** (scout) <https://sabr.org/interview/clyde-sukeforth-1994/>



Interviewee: Sukeforth, Clyde

Interview Date: 12/6/1994

Interviewer: Bencks, Bob

Enjoy this article by James Lincoln Ray!

<https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/Clyde-Sukeforth/>

From Wikipedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clyde\\_Sukeforth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clyde_Sukeforth)

Rickey told Sukeforth to urge Robinson to come back with him to Brooklyn for a meeting with Rickey and the Dodgers. Sukeforth met Robinson again in Toledo, Ohio, and the two men traveled by railway to Brooklyn for the historic meeting at the Dodgers' Montague Street offices on August 28. He was the only other person in the room when Rickey told Robinson of his plans to offer him a contract to play in Montreal in 1946.

Then, in 1947, Sukeforth—functioning in the unwanted role of interim manager of the Dodgers after the suspension of Leo Durocher—wrote Robinson's name into the Dodger lineup on Opening Day on April 15 against the Braves at Ebbets Field.

**Birdie Tebbetts** (1992) – Tebbetts **scouted** 1968-97 for different teams: the Mets, the Yankees, the Orioles, and the Marlins

<https://sabr.org/interview/birdie-tebbetts-1992/>

Interviewee: Tebbetts, Birdie

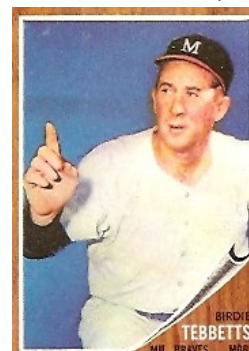
Interview Date: 9/2/1992

Interviewer: Austin, Dan

Enjoy this article by Tom Simon!

<https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/Birdie-Tebbetts/>

More here [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Birdie\\_Tebbetts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Birdie_Tebbetts)



**Junior Thompson** (1994) – **Giants** 1946-47  
<https://sabr.org/interview/gene-junior-thompson-1994/>

Interviewee: Thompson, Junior

Interview Date: 3/22/1994

Interviewer: Bradley, Rick

Enjoy this article was written by Charles F. Faber!

<https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/Junior-Thompson/>

More here [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Junior\\_Thompson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Junior_Thompson)

## Roland Hemond

Most baseball fans have heard of Roland Hemond either because of his work, while alive, as a scout, a general manager, a team executive, a philanthropist, a SABR panelist, presenter, or just as a friendly face anywhere, anytime. SABR members have written articles about Hemond and his achievements. Here are *parts* of his baseball journey:

1951 - the Boston/Milwaukee Braves assistant farm director

1952-60 - Executive staff Milwaukee Braves

1957 - Milwaukee Braves World Series **ring**

1961-70 - Los Angeles Angels scouting director

1972 - Major League Executive of the Year (Chicago White Sox) by The Sporting News

1983 - Major League Executive of the Year (Chicago White Sox) by United Press International

1989 - Major League Executive of the Year (Baltimore Orioles) by The Sporting News

Early 1990s - Hemond joined SABR

1996-2000 - Arizona Diamondbacks executive

2000 - helped prepare Team USA for Pan American Games and the Olympics

2001 – The Roland Hemond Award (first recipient) by the Society for American Baseball Research Scouts Committee for his contributions to scouting.

2001 - Crowned “King of Baseball” by Minor League Baseball

2001 - Distinguished Service Award by Baseball America (its 20th anniversary celebration)

2001-07 - Chicago White Sox executive

2001 - Arizona Diamondbacks World Series **ring**

2002 - Judge Emil E. Fuchs Award by the Boston Baseball Writers Association for long and meritorious contributions to baseball.

2002 - The Roland Hemond Award was created by Jerry Reinsdorf and the Chicago White Sox

2003 - Roland Hemond, Dave Yoakum, Dennis Gilbert, and Harry Minor create the Professional Scouts Foundation which provides support to scouts who have been in baseball 25+ years but are in financial need. Neither donors nor recipients are made public. <http://www.baseball-reference.com/minors/player.cgi?id=yoakum001dav>

2003 - Branch Rickey Award for “exceptional community service” by the Rotary club

### Roland Hemond (2005)

<https://sabr.org/interview/roland-hemond-2005/>

Interviewee: Hemond, Roland

Interview Date: 2005

Interviewer: Liptak, Mark

This Oral History interview (PDF transcript only, no audio) is part of the Mark Liptak

Collection. Enjoy this article by [Bill Nowlin](#)! <https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/Roland-Hemond/>





2005 - Hemond played a strong role in the success of the Chicago White Sox who won their first world championship since 1917, and he was given a commemorative **ring**.

2007-17 - Arizona Diamondbacks executive

2011 - Buck O'Neil Lifetime Achievement Award. On being told of the award, Hemond was almost tongue-tied, calling it, "the epitome of the highest of pinnacles that I feel I would ever enjoy." He had no idea the award was coming. "I couldn't handle it. I couldn't talk," he admitted. [Associated Press dispatch, February 23, 2011]  
<https://baseballhall.org/discover-more/awards/oneil/roland-hemond>

### **Roland Hemond (2012)**

<https://sabr.org/interview/roland-hemond-2012/>

Interviewee: Hemond, Roland (2012)

Interview Date: 6/27/2012

Interviewer: Paulson, Dave

Enjoy this article by Bill Nowlin!

<https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/Roland-Hemond/>

Read more <https://sabr.org/interview/roland-hemond-2012-2/>



### **Roland Hemond (2012)**

SABR 42 one-on-one session with baseball executive Roland Hemond, moderated by David Laurila

Interviewee: Hemond, Roland (2012)

Interview Date: 2012-06-30

Interviewer: Laurila, David

<https://sabr.org/latest/sabr-42-roland-hemond-one-one-david-laurila/>

2015 – Roland Hemond Field in Phoenix is dedicated by the Arizona Diamondbacks

2017 - Arizona's Flame Delhi Chapter of SABR is renamed the Hemond-Delhi Arizona Chapter

As of 12/21/21, the SABR bio at <https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/roland-hemond/> superbly crafted by Bill Nowlin has been updated to include Hemond's death. "Roland Hemond died in Colorado at age 92 of natural causes on December 12, 2021, survived by his wife, Margo; five children, Susan, Tere, Robert, Jay, and Ryan, four grandchildren; and baseball friends and protégés in every organization."

Nowlin added this: An appreciation of his life by Jacob Pomrenke can be found at [SABR.org/latest/in-memoriam-roland-hemond](https://sabr.org/latest/in-memoriam-roland-hemond). Also worth exploring to learn more about Roland Hemond is Baseball-Reference which includes "further reading" [https://www.baseball-reference.com/bullpen/Roland\\_Hemond](https://www.baseball-reference.com/bullpen/Roland_Hemond) and the Hall of Fame site at <https://baseballhall.org/news/roland-hemond-passes-away>.

## SHARING OUR STORIES: Roosevelt Stadium

**By Mike Frank**

Not all minor league locations are rural and rustic. Roosevelt Stadium opened at Dreyer's Point in Jersey City. The first event was on April 23, 1937.

It served as the home of the New York Giants' top farm club, the Jersey City Giants, from 1937 to 1950. One of the highlights was April 18, 1946, when Jackie Robinson (then on Montreal) made his debut in organized baseball.

Next important dates were 1956-57 when the Brooklyn Dodgers played 15 home games there (one against each of seven NL teams both years plus an exhibition against Cleveland). At that time the Stadium had 24,000 seats but only 10,000 parking spots. They might have played the full 1958 season there while a Brooklyn ballpark was under construction, but they took off, never to be heard from again.

On July 8, 1960, the Cincinnati Reds' top farm team escaped from Havana against gunshots. They stayed in Jersey City through 1961.

In 1977 (Indians) and 1978 (A's), Jersey had a franchise in the AA Eastern League. Access to the players was easy.

The Indians' manager was Johnny Orsino; he had a nephew on my soccer team. The A's featured Rickey Henderson. At that time, I was trying to catch every AL and NL team, mostly visiting New York, so I tried the same with the Eastern League. Even Thetford Mines!

There were many non-baseball events but that's beyond the scope of this article. The Stadium closed in 1981 and was demolished in 1986. Now there's Society Hill Housing. One plaque as a reminder.



**Roosevelt Stadium**

### Al Blumkin's Baseball Trivia (Answers are on page 26)

1. In 1947, this player hit 51 home runs and struck out 42 times while playing for a New York team. Who was it?
2. Which two players – who were on opposed sides in a famous World Series game – are the only two players whose teammates (at one time) were Mickey Mantle and Duke Snyder?
3. Which three pitchers formed the core staff of the Yankees from 1949-1953?
4. Which three catchers combined for 60+ homers on the 1961 Yankees?
5. Which pitchers started three games each in the 1973 World Series?
6. Which pitcher started three games for the Mets in the 1986 World Series?

## SHARING OUR STORIES: Eddie Collins Memorial Park

By Cliff Blau

At eight months old, the future Hall of Famer Eddie Collins was moved from his place of birth in Millerton, NY (Dutchess County) two counties south to Tarrytown, NY (in Westchester). Edward Trowbridge Collins Sr. was born there on May 2, 1887 and as these pictures show, the people (903 as of the 2020 census) in the tiny town of Millerton still remember him being born there. The well-tended Eddie

showcase for many sports swimming, soccer, and  
Eddie Collins was from Philadelphia to Chicago World Series) and then back Athletics in 1927 for his last

Collins had impressive retired and most “statisticians” time list of top second



Collins Memorial Park is a besides baseball, including basketball. moved as a player as well, (where he played in the 1919 again to the Philadelphia years in the majors. numbers by the time he rank him highly in the all-basemen.



Collins still holds the major league record of 512 career sacrifice bunts, 100 more than any other player. At [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eddie\\_Collins](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eddie_Collins) are these highlights:

- \* first modern major leaguer steal 80 bases in a season
- \* shares MLB record of six steals in a game (did it twice)
- \* major league records for career games (2,650), assists (7,630) and total chances (14,591) at second base
- \* ranks second in putouts (6,526) at second base.

Millerton, NY is justly proud to display the name of native Eddie Collins on this Memorial Park. He retired with a .333 BA and his outstanding year-by-year statistics can be seen more fully at Baseball-Reference <https://www.baseball-reference.com/players/c/collied01.shtml> \. They demonstrate his value to both the Philadelphia Athletics and the Chicago White Sox.



## SHARING OUR STORIES: Frankie Frisch

### **The Jints Column**

**By Gary Mintz**

[Editor's Note: For this issue, the HOF player Frankie Frisch is representing the NY Giants]

The comparatively short list of MLB players who have never appeared in a minor league game (excluding the ones who, like pitcher Walter Johnson, went down to the minors at some point before retiring) includes Bonus Babies and Draft selections. See them all here [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_baseball\\_players\\_who\\_went\\_directly\\_to\\_Major\\_League\\_Baseball](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_baseball_players_who_went_directly_to_Major_League_Baseball). Before the changes after the WWII era, Tillie Shafer (1909) was the first of **four NY Giants** who went straight to the team with no minor league experience. The other three were Charlie Faust (1911), Frankie Frisch (1919), and Mel Ott (1926).

NY Giants Preservation Society member Lee Lowenfish will give a talk about Frankie Frisch on May 28 at the annual Cooperstown Symposium. He's in the SABR Directory if you want to talk about the Fordham Flash with Lee.



### **Frankie Frisch (1960)**

<https://sabr.org/interview/frankie-frisch-1960/>

Interviewee: Frisch, Frankie

Interview Date: 1960

Interviewer: Evans, Clifford

*From the Clifford Evans Archive, used by permission of Gregory L. Peterson. Radio executive Evans conducted audio interviews of baseball players during spring training in the early 1960s. [Click here](#) to watch this interview as a video.*

Enjoy this article by Fred Stein <https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/frankie-frisch/>

Read more [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frankie\\_Frisch](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frankie_Frisch)

### **Al Blumkin's Trivia Answers (from page 24)**

1. In 1947, this player hit 51 home runs and struck out 42 times while playing for a New York team. Who was it? **Johnny Mize**
2. Which two players – who were on opposed sides in a famous World Series game – are the only two players whose teammates (at one time) were Mickey Mantle and Duke Snyder?  
**Don Larsen and Sal Maglie.**
3. Which three pitchers formed the core staff of the Yankees from 1949-1953?  
**Vic Raschi, Allie Reynolds, Ed Lopat**
4. Which three catchers combined for 60+ homers on the 1961 Yankees?  
**Yogi Berra, Johnny Blanchard, and Elston Howard**
5. Which pitchers started three games each in the 1973 World Series?  
**Ken Holtzman and Jon Matlack**
6. Which pitcher started three games for the Mets in the 1986 World Series? **Ron Darling**