

The Baseball Magazine For People Who Hate Baseball Magazines

*Spring
2008*

ZISK # 16



An Unexpected Truce: Zisk Meets Bobby Cox

We Needed That Extra Day: Leap into Baseball's Leap Year
Pretty in Pink: A Day at the Nats Baseball Clinic for Women
Hey, Did Something Happen to Roger Clemens Recently?
We Like Lots and Lots of Lists: The Zisk Book Corner
...and more!

ZISK

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Editor's note:

The eight months since we published *Zisk* #15 have seen a tremendous amount of change in the game which we write about and obsess over. When I dropped the last envelope for a subscriber in the mail, **Barry Bonds** still hadn't been charged with anything; The Red Sox seemed sure to drummed out of the ALCS by the Indians; **Roger Clemens** was just a regular douchebag; Senator **George Mitchell** and his team seemed to making no progress on their steroid report; **Fukudome** was a word I accidentally sent in emails when I didn't spell check; it seemed certain that **Johan Santana** would be headed to the Yankees; **Joe Girardi** was still calling games for Fox; and Cubs fan **Hilary Clinton** had a sure lock on the Democratic Presidential nomination. (Wow, that was a quite the quaint time we lived in, eh?)

The off season has evolved to a point where it's not an off season at all, especially here in the Big Apple. Talks of trades and "I knew Clemens was on steroids when he threw that bat" would dominated the back pages of the tabloids, even as the football Giants made their way through a Cinderella-like run. Even the sports talk stations in town (and their callers) spent more and more time dissecting the moves, or non-moves.

It seems to be getting harder and harder to use the beginning of each season to mark the passage of time. I miss those days. For me, opening day was always a time to take stock in what had happened the previous year. And now with multiple opening days (Japan, D.C., Rio, Mars, etc.) that feeling has slipped away. After eight months of seeing friends lose spouses, parents, grandparents, businesses and jobs, and having my own brush with mortality and watching friends go through the same thing, I sure could have used that feeling again.

We hope this issue brings that feeling to you. Or at least makes you chuckle.

—Steve

I Think We Need Some Pepto in Queens by Steve Reynolds

"Someday we'll look back on this and it will all seem funny." —**Bruce Springsteen** they've usually preceded by some sort of booze in large quantities.

The above line from the classic rock staple "Rosalita" caught my ear the other day. I'd been listening to Springsteen's *The Wild, The Innocent and the E Street Shuffle* at my desk as

a small tribute to keyboardist **Danny Federici**, who had died the day before after a long battle with melanoma. And I almost wanted to stop my iTunes because what I was thinking was not a way to remember the man and his organ riffs. I was thinking something much, much worse. And I was thinking it about the New York Mets

of the past 18 months, the ones that choked away an NLCS and a division title in that brief time period. My thought?

What if we look back on this and it will all seem NOT funny—only incredibly painful?

It's a cruel idea to put into one's own head about your favorite sports team. But as I write this paragraph, the last two days the print media and WFAN have been hashing and rehashing whether or not struggling first baseman **Carlos Delgado**—a man who has taken only two curtain calls in his entire career, and both were for actual historic events—dissed all of Shea Stadium by not coming out for a one on Sunday April 27th. And the whole hubbub is so idiotic it makes me wonder, what the heck happened? Why do I have this nauseous feeling in the pit of my stomach whenever I turned on 660 on my A.M. dial? And why is my head hurting whenever I watch highlights on SNY at night?

I sit back and realize I've had similar feelings before—but

Then it struck me: I had a Mets hangover.

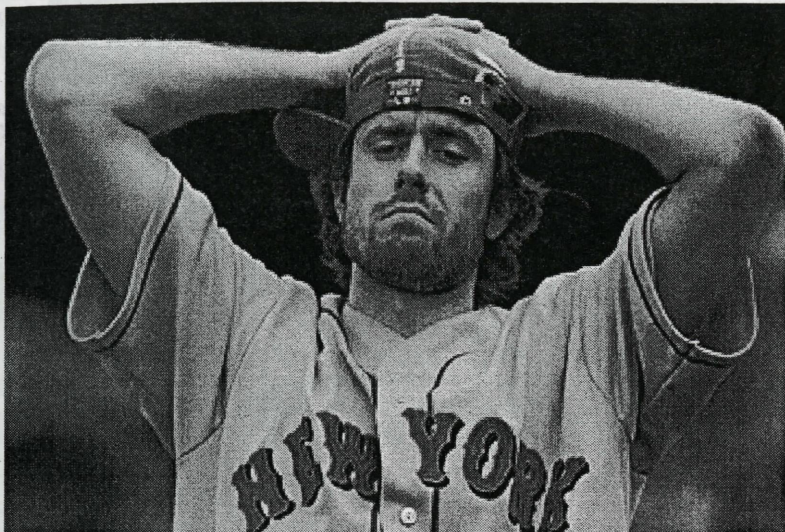
It made total sense! The gamut of feelings I've run

through on various Saturday and Sunday (and sometimes Friday) mornings have been replicated by the past 180 or so games on the Amazin's schedule. Regret? Check. Anger? Yup. Remorse? For sure. Irrational outbursts where I wanted to punch my bedroom wall? Ouch, but yes. A pain that will only go away by laying down for six hours

straight while watching a Family Guy marathon? Yes sir.

Now if it was just me that had this hangover, it would be no problem. I've already let most of the 2008 season go by without blogging it on the Zisk website. [Ed: plug, plug: ziskmagazine.blogspot.com] Sure, I've had health problems to deal with as the season began. But as I've started my exercise program, I have not once taken my little A.M. receiver so I could check in on the Mets. And that would be the perfect chance to catch up with **Howie Rose**. I've even not turned on games on Sundays afternoons when I've been home—and tried avoid watching day games at work, where I'd basically be getting paid for rooting for **John Maine**!

But all my transgressions seem minor compared to the rest of the Flushing faithful. Simple put, Mets fans *are pissed*. They're venting on the airwaves, to members of the media and lord, lordy, lordy, they're writing vicious things on Met fans sites everywhere. Basically the fanbase needs about 100 doses of stadium sized Advil to make this feeling go away. And even then, I fear it might



not. Perhaps the one amazing season of 2006 (and the trade for **Johan Santana**) has set fans expectations so high that nothing less than a championship will do. (I'd call this the Yankee-ization of the Mets fanbase.) And that

saddens me. Baseball is supposed to be fun and, at times, healing. And right now it is most certainly not for tens of thousand of people, and that's is wearing off on me. Heck, I even booed when **Scott**

Schoeneweis was brought into the first game I saw this season. This isn't like me. And it's making me worry.

My friend **Jason Fry** at *Faith and Fear in Flushing* and I not only share a love of **The Figgs**, beer, and the **Hoodoo Gurus**, but we

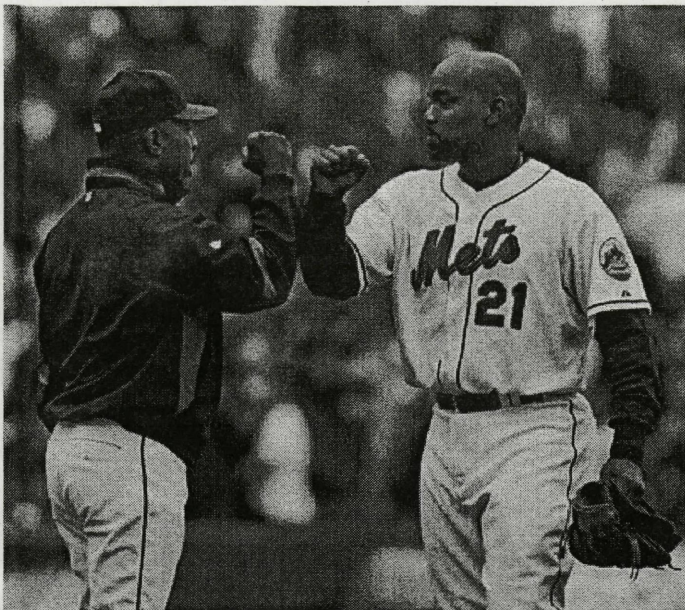
also shared very similar feelings about the Mets last summer long before they collapsed. He wrote a great paragraph about this year's team that I feel compelled to share with you here:

"By too many indications this is the same badly constructed, poorly led, sadly complacent team I came to thoroughly dislike last year. Last summer I found out something I pretty much knew anyway, and would happily have gone to my grave never having confirmed: *It's no fun disliking your favorite team.*"

I hate to say it, but this hangover has me thinking the same thing. I think I would feel better if it seemed as though someone else besides **David Wright** cared. From all appearances, no one else does. To wit here's some choice clippings from the National League's highest payroll:

"We as a team play hard and want to win more than [the fans] do. [*Umm, usually it doesn't look like it.*] That's why I don't understand the mentality. I guess they have a right to express themselves," —**Willie Randolph**

"If you're just booing for ridiculous reasons, you just let them look like idiots and go about your business." —**Billy Wagner**



"I don't really want to care about the fans anymore. If they want to boo, let them boo. I'm not going to take them out to dinner." —**Scott Schoeneweis**

That's right, the feeling has become mutual—and Scott's not going to treat us to Frostys at Wendys! How did it come to pass that within just a season plus this love affair between the Mets and their fans has turned into a sideshow deserving of its own episode of *Jerry Springer*?

Oh, wait, I know why. Because this team still

seems to be very full of themselves:

"The collapse didn't come because the Phillies beat us, the collapse came because we played bad. The Phillies didn't—I don't know how to say this—it wasn't like they beat us. A lot of times we beat ourselves, defense or just not doing things [we'd] done all year." —**Billy Wagner**, the opening weekend of the season

Cripes, the 1986 team was totally full of themselves, but at least they had some gusto to back it up. This bunch, I don't think they would know what gusto means even if I pointed it out in a dictionary.

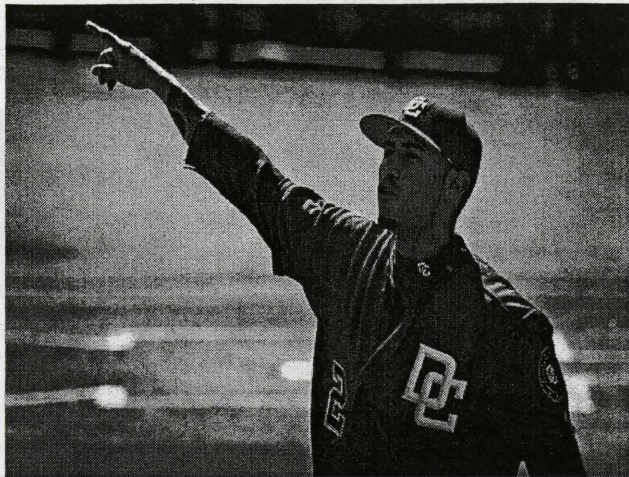
I didn't sit down to write a piece that had any big solutions to the Mets problems. For all I know there are none until next season when some more contracts will be off the books. All I know is that during the darkest days of the **Art Howe** or **Joe Torre** eras, it never felt this bad.

As Springsteen once sang, "Glory days, well they'll pass you by." I hope this time it isn't true.

In the Pink by Dr. Nancy Golden

If not for the pink t-shirts, it might just have been a perfect day.

The players were likely still sleeping off last night's rain-delayed game against the Braves when I showed up at RFK Stadium in DC that September morning. That's OK, because I came prepared to swing for the seats and take grounders at short—**Felipe Lopez** would only get in my way.

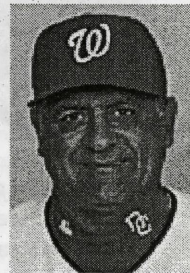


Ha! If only I had that much confidence going into the day. The truth was, despite the fact that the Nationals billed the day as a "Baseball 101 Clinic for Women," I was still worried that my desire to run around a major league ball field and meet some coaches might be hampered by my lack of certain skills that seemed helpful to the game. Namely: hitting, throwing, and catching. While I have a solid knowledge and appreciation of the game as a fan, the Nats' previous events designed to increase female attendance, mainly Ladies Night happy hours, required only skills that I had long ago mastered—drinking beer and flagging down waiters carrying hors d'oeuvres. And now my dirty secret was about to be revealed—an avid fan of baseball, my mastery of its play is just about on par with **George Bush**'s mastery of words containing three or more syllables. And while in reality I knew deep down that it didn't at all matter if Third Base Coach **Tim Tolman** found out that I had a weak arm, I couldn't help but worry: What if I couldn't even hit the cut-off man?

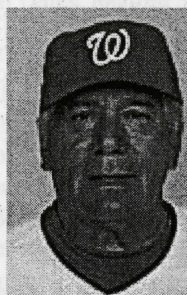
Waiting outside the Stadium at 8:30 a.m. for everyone to arrive, my co-clinician **Kelly** and I were assigned to groups and awarded our swag. Some of the freebies were standard fare—a Nats cooler, school supplies, a scorebook, etc. Others were decidedly girly—a pack of baseball cards featuring Nats players and their mothers, and a t-shirt in the girliest of all girl colors, pink. (Which will so perfectly match the pink baseball cap from that last Ladies Night gathering dust in my closet.) At least the wedding planners weren't sponsors this time around.

But who had time to gripe when we suddenly found ourselves led through the stands and down into the dugout? We take advantage of the requisite photo ops—sitting on the bench, leaning up against the railing, etc.—before our coaches arrive to teach us some baseball. On hand this morning are all of the Nats actual coaches. And even though they were up just as late as the players last night, each one of them acts like there's nowhere in the whole world they'd rather be than back there on the field that morning. Then again, it is just them and 75 enthusiastic baseball-lovin' chicks—maybe they actually speak the truth on this one. Okay, so far all I'd had to do was smile, pose, and clap. Now it was time to get to business.

After a team stretch and warm-up in the infield, we break into our groups and head off to our mentors. My opening set of drills is over at first, where coach **Jerry Morales** goes over signs with us, fields questions about a dubious call from last night's game, and teaches us how to run with men on base. Morales is such a good coach that I swear I feel myself swell with inner pride as he praises me for a particularly well-executed banana turn around the bag. Next, over at third base, Tolman teaches us how to get in front of the ball, and then hits grounders for us to field and throw back to the catcher. And here's where any fears of my dead arm dissipate, for women—contrary to what you've seen on *Gossip Girl* and *America's Next Top Model*—are actually uber-supportive of one another in situations like this. My groupies clap for every throw of mine that eventually trickles back to the plate like I'm throwing out the tying



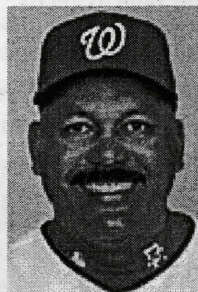
run of some future World Series the Nationals might make it to when I'm too old to remember any of this. I even take some extra grounders just to get the praise, and wonder how it would feel to really make a play and have 40,000 fans cheering for me instead of 10.



Feeling more confident now, I follow my group into the clubhouse to the domain of Bench Coach **Pat Corrales**. Stepping through stagnant puddles of water and ducking crumbling concrete, I envision this to be a good spot for a donation jar for the new stadium, its \$611 million price tag a bit of a sore subject for the city. Following a brief lesson on form and execution, I enter

the indoor batting cage to take my licks. Swing and a miss! Did I mention that the ball is on a tee? That's okay, because the real victory was that I am no longer afraid to swing for the seats. With a little personal coaching from batting practice pitcher **Jose Martinez**, I make good contact on my next few attempts, and score myself a double with two RBIs in my head.

Our last lesson is in the bullpen. After catching the view from that really tall bench, we all grip practice balls as demonstrated by

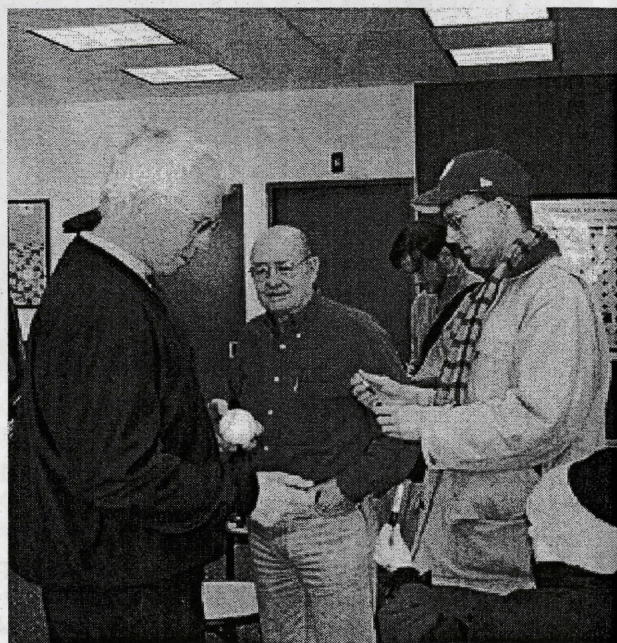


Bullpen Coach **Rick Aponte** and throw off the mound until the lunch bell rings. And that's it. I'd made it through my clinic without embarrassment, not because I didn't suck, but because it was readily apparent that nobody cared that I sucked. Thank you, women. And while we're speaking of women, let me make

it abundantly clear that the piss-poor baseball skills described herein belong to me alone and are not some kind of general indictment against female athleticism. Most of the women present knew exactly what they were doing. I just happened to grow up playing sports that have no relevance to real life. (Pick-up game of field hockey anyone? Great, just let me grab my kilt!)

As we enjoyed our post-clinic lunch with **Don Sutton** and MASN broadcasters **Bob Carpenter** and **Debby Taylor**, I couldn't help but think how much I loved Major League Baseball's attempt to pander to women for their

attendance. (Please, don't tell them they had me at "Strike One.") Sure, sometimes you have to put up with pink t-shirts (c'mon folks, the team color is clearly RED), handouts defining terms like "pop-up," and swag from perfume dealers and nail studios, but I've also enjoyed all-you-can-drink happy hours with the cost of my ticket, appearances by players about to take the field, memorabilia give-aways with excellent odds, and now, baseball lessons from major league coaches and lunch with a Hall of Famer. And all because I have boobs! I used to feel funny about attending the Nationals' women-only events (what if the tables were turned?) but I've learned to relax and enjoy the benefits. I figure after so many years waiting on those really long lines for the bathroom, I must deserve some kind of payback.



I wasn't able to stay for the game that night, but ending my baseball activities that day on Don Sutton's stand-up routine and some autographed balls swiped from the bullpen was a nice way to go. I'll see you back here for the next event. And yes, you tricky bastards, I'll bring my girlfriends.

Dr. Nancy Golden will see you at the next Ladies Night event at the new Nationals Park in DC. She'll be the slightly tipsy one, in the red shirt and cap, unsuccessfully hitting on the giant Teddy Roosevelt mascot.

Leap Year and Baseball: Lena Blackburne, Your Name is Mud by John Shiffer

While it's true that Christmas comes but once a year, February 29 comes a lot less often, like once every four years, thanks largely to **Pope Gregory XIII**. No relation to 1950s American League outfielder **Dave Pope**, Gregory was the guy who created the Gregorian calendar, putting February 29 forever in place to soak up that extra .2425 of a day that builds up every year because the Earth's trip around the sun refuses to settle in at exactly 365 days. So, while February 29 may not be unique, it is unusual and thus it seems appropriate to recall some of the more unusual happenings in baseball history associated with Leap Year Day.

Lena Blackburne was one. He not only died on Feb. 29, 1968 in Riverside, New Jersey, he lived by the riverside. The Delaware River, that is. Near where Rancocas Creek (pronounced "CRIK" for those of you not from the area) runs into the Delaware. You see, outside of the fact that his real name was **Russell Aubrey Blackburne**, and not Lena (why would a baseball player want to use a nickname like "Lena?"), Blackburne was a pretty ordinary utility infielder, primarily for the White Sox in the years around World War I. Anyone with a career .214/.284/.268 batting line for 550 games is pretty ordinary. It was Blackburne's post-playing career that made him interesting. Yes, the pride of Clifton Heights, Pa., managed the White Sox for a year-and-a-half in the late 20s, served as a coach for the Browns and Athletics in the 30s, and scouted for the latter team in the 40s and 50s, but a lot of old players have been baseball lifers. What made old Lena special is what he found down by the Delaware River after his playing days. Mud. Lots of mud. While this may not come as a surprise to anyone who has wandered along the shores of the Delaware (or any other river), this was no ordinary mud. It was "Lena Blackburne Baseball Rubbing Mud." Mud that would take the slippery sheen off of new baseballs, but leave them still a pristine white. Mud that has been rubbed onto every single major league baseball for some 50 years, an enduring legacy way past Feb. 29, 1968. Lena Blackburne, your name is mud.

A few years before Blackburne's death, say 132 years before, a boy was born on February 29, 1836 in Brooklyn. And there's a small tale associated with him. He must

have been a small baby, because he grew up to stand just 5' 3", making him just about the smallest major leaguer this side of **Eddie Gaedel** and **Cub Stricker**. But, make no mistake about it, **Richard J. "Dickey" Pearce** was a major leaguer, and a major influence on the development of the game. He is, in fact, one of the game's earliest players who has been sadly overlooked by the Hall of Fame. If you look at his statistics for his play in the National Association and the National League, he doesn't stand out very much, a .252/.270/.276 batting line. But, do the math, he was 40 years old (though he'd only celebrated 10 birthdays) when the National League started in 1876. Way past his prime. Dickey Pearce's prime started in the 1850s. In 1857, Pearce was part of the first year of the National Association of Base Ball Players. Playing shortstop for the fabled Brooklyn Atlantics, he was one of the best hitters in the NABBP that first season of organized baseball play, tallying the third-most runs (28 in nine games – the Atlantics went 7-1-1) in the NABBP. But, that wasn't why Dickey Pearce should be in the Hall of Fame. You see, Dickey Pearce wasn't just a shortstop, he invented the modern shortstop position. Prior to Mr. Pearce, the shortstop was just that – an extra man that played halfway into the outfield (sort of like a softball shortfielder) who acted as a relay man between the outfield and the infield. The base balls of the 1850s were so light that you couldn't throw them very far, hence, a relay man was needed to get the ball back to the infield with dispatch. Pearce apparently got the bright idea that he could play in that hole between second and third base, scooping up any ground balls that came his way, and still be able to scoot into the outfield as needed to be a relay man. If indeed fame can be defined as causing or making a paradigm shift in a sport (hello, **Babe**), then Dickey Pearce should rightfully be famous.

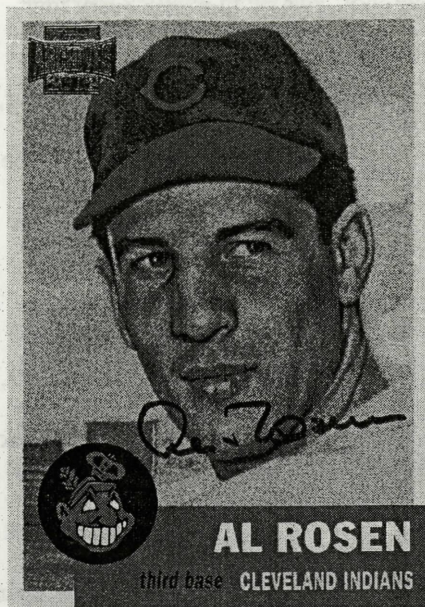
Of course, Dickey Pearce is far from the only 19th Century ballplayer neglected by the Hall of Fame. One of the more egregious oversights in this area was finally rectified on Feb. 29, 2000, when **Bid McPhee** was voted into the Hall, just 57 years too late for the finest second baseman of the 19th Century to enjoy the honor. A slightly-better-than-average hitter (career OPS+ of 106, led his league in triples and home runs once each), McPhee was sort of the **Bill Mazeroski** of his era.

(Actually, he was a much better hitter than Maz, whose career OPS+ was just 84.) His forte was fielding, and he did it without a glove for most of his career. A very rare 19th Century player in that he played his entire career with one team (Cincinnati), McPhee's 18-year major league career was marked by an incredible set of fielding numbers, in an era when good fielding was far more important (because it was so difficult to be a really good fielder) than it is today. Of his 2131 games, only five were spent at a position other than second base (an incredibly rare feat for any player), where he posted a .944 fielding percentage, a remarkable 25 points above the league average. And, when he finally decided to use a glove, in 1896, his fielding percentage at second jumped from .955 to .978 at the age of 36, setting a single season record for his position that lasted for 29 years. (Some sources claim he was the last player to take the field without wearing a glove, but this is untrue.) His range factor wasn't bad, either, a 6.33 as compared to the league's 5.72. So why wasn't he elected to the Hall until 57 years after he died? He still holds the records for career and single season putouts by a second baseman. Seems McPhee made the bad career move of playing the first half of his career in the American Association... an organization almost completely ignored by the various Veterans Committees over the years. In fact, McPhee was arguably the first AA star to ever be elected to the Hall as a player.

A much better career move was made by first baseman **Howie "Steeple" Schultz**. A move that was recognized on February 29, 1944, when he was turned down by the military at a time when World WarII was requiring almost anyone who could walk to join up. Howie Schultz was just over six-and-a-half feet tall, which made him a good target at first base, but too tall for the military's height restrictions at the time. As a result Schultz, an exceeding marginal major league talent (he was a better pro basketball player), ended up having a six-year major league career, largely with the Dodgers, actually lasting in the majors until 1948, when, at the age of just 26, the Phillies and Reds figured out that, just because he was a good target, the fact that he couldn't hit sort of spoiled the effect. Schultz' career marks of .241/.281/.349 led to an awful OPS+ of 75. Schultz didn't even have the distinction of being the tallest draft-ineligible player to hang around the majors during the war. Pirates' and Giants' pitcher **Johnny "Whiz" Gee** was 6' 9".

Of course, there have been a few other notable players in addition to Dickey Pearce who were born on February 29. The Wild Hoss of the Osage, **Pepper Martin**, was one. So were reliever **Steve Mingori** (1944) and outfielder

Terrence Long (1976). Still, only a dozen men born on February 29 have made the majors, and the best by far was **Al Rosen**. Although he only played seven full seasons (and a few games in three others) with the Indians, not becoming a regular until a couple of years after his sixth birthday and playing his last year just having passed his eighth



birthday, Al Rosen could hit. His career OPS+ was 137 (96th all time) and he authored a .285/.384/.495 batting line, making him a relatively high average hitter with power (a season high of 43 home runs when he was MVP in 1953) who also got a lot of walks (587 in 3725 at bats). You extend that over a full 15 year career, and you have a sure Hall of Famer, with possibly a little extra credit for being the third best Jewish player behind **Hank Greenberg** and **Sandy Koufax**.

Finally, although there's typically not much going on in baseball on February 29 outside of Spring Training games, February 29 does mark the anniversary of a record-breaking event that took place on February 29, 1972. It was 36 years ago that **Henry Aaron**, just two years short of setting the all-time home run mark, signed a contract with the Atlanta Braves for \$200,000 a year for three years, or some \$15.3 million less than Barry Bonds got last year. And if that isn't enough to make you leap, nothing is.

John Shiffert is the author of Baseball: 1862-2003, Baseball... Then and Now, and Base Ball in Philadelphia.

Clemens Laments by Jake Austen

Being blogless and bereft of anyone around me who would care, I never had a chance to vent my **Roger Clemens** diatribes leading up to or during his bullshit hearings. (The bullshit being Congressional baseball hearings held during wartime, not Clemens' performance at said hearing.)

So anywhere, here are my thoroughly out of date thoughts:



I never liked Clemens. I'd venture that my low point as a baseball fan, and perhaps as a human being, was watching The Rocket beat the White Sox in late September,

2001. Doing so he became the first pitcher to start a season 20-1, amidst a post-World Trade Center attack atmosphere in which it was considered unpatriotic to root against the Yankees. My lowliness was demonstrated in the late innings when drunk-on-Giuliani Sox fans actually cheered Clemens on, to which my response, I am not proud to say, was to quietly, but (pathetically) earnestly declare, "Fuck September 11th!"

I was always happy to see the Sox beat Clemens. In 2003 they scored nine earned runs off him, one of his worst ever starts, and in 2007 the Sox scored eight runs off him in one and a third innings. (The Sox then remarkably gave up eight runs in the bottom of the second, before winning 13-9). Clemens was booed off the field in that one, and one of these games was with his mother in the stands (maybe that's why she suggested he start B-12 injections). And, of course, there was the less than satisfying, but nonetheless sweet, 2005 White Sox World Series Game

One victory that featured an aged Clemens hobbling off the field and not returning after giving up three runs in two innings.

I suppose Clemens is lying and guilty, but I don't know for sure, and if one's main argument for his guilt is, "Why would **Pettite** lie?" I think a reasonable response might be that maybe he just hates Clemens and wants to screw him over. I guess Pettite isn't supposed to be like that, but c'mon, nobody's that Christian.

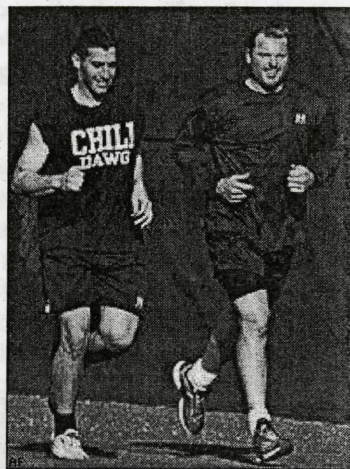
I am far less offended by the idea that Roger Clemens would take performance enhancing drugs than I am that he got to start the baseball season whenever he damn well felt like it, or that he didn't travel with the team, and was not required to attend games he was not pitching.

If he took steroids, I don't really care, mainly because I simply don't believe that they made him better. Roger "Fucking" Clemens would have found a way to win 300 and strike out 4,000 through sheer will and spite and evil whether he was juiced or not.

I emphatically do not believe that steroids were responsible for Clemens' dickish personality. Nor, I imagine, do his wife, kids, teammates, bosses, or "doctors."

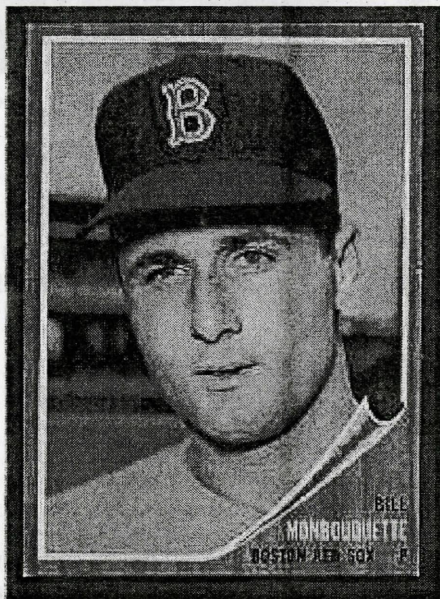
I am genuinely disappointed that he won't play this season. The Clemenses and **Ricky Hendersons** and **Julio Francos** of this world should play Major League Baseball until they keel over on the field. I didn't like him, but I definitely will miss him.

Jake Austen publishes Roctober magazine and helps produce the public access children's dance show Chic-A-Go-Go.



The Zisk Interview: Bill Monbouquette

Former pitcher and coach **Bill Monbouquette** accomplished a lot during his decades in the big leagues—chief among his credentials: a no-hitter, a 20-win season and two trips to the All-Star game—but they pale compared to his ability to tell a story. When my brother and I attended the Syracuse Chiefs' Hot Stove Dinner this past winter Monbouquette, who played with the Red Sox, Tigers, Yankees, and Giants over the course of an 11-year career (1958-1968), stole the show. His stories were funny and warm and, truth be told, they felt like they'd been told hundreds of times. It reminded me of watching comedian Don Rickles in the documentary *Mr. Warmth*. Rickles probably hasn't changed his act in years and why should he? There's nothing but the sense of enjoyment, no fatigue, no cynicism, no need for new material. Likewise for Monbouquette. Talking to fans was a pleasure not an obligation. Zisk caught up with Bill Monbouquette in February. (Interview by Mike Faloon)



I really enjoyed your stories from the Hot Stove League dinner in Syracuse and one player who seemed to have a big impact on you, a former teammate, was Ted Williams. You went fishing with Ted Williams.

Yeah, I was up in New Brunswick. I stayed two or

three days at his camp. We had breakfast every morning and he'd get up at the crack of dawn and he would be yelling "toot ta toot toot toot" like he had a trumpet. He was a very early riser. I don't know how many guys have ever fished with him. That's Atlantic salmon, where his place is. When I was playing with him in the clubhouse

he had a fly rod and a rumble lure and he'd say, Open that back pocket of yours, and about 20-30 feet away flip it right in



there like it was nothing. This guy was not only a great player, the best hitter I ever saw, this guy was a great fisherman, fly fisherman, especially. I'm not the only guy that's ever said that. It was a pleasure to play with him. He was a boyhood idol and still today he is my idol. I was fortunate to play with him for '58, '59, and '60. I was there the last day he hit his home run. During the course of the game he'd hit three other balls that the wind held back and you get to thinking, If only Ted could do this. There I was right in the bullpen and we knew he wasn't going to New York to finish the season, the weekend, and he ends up hitting this screamer into the bullpen—nothing was going to hold this ball back. I had a chance to catch it and I was in such awe. When it hit the back of that bullpen it made one hell of a loud noise and that was it. That was the end of his career. We all wish we could go out like that. Unfortunately it doesn't happen. Only to the great ones, and he sure as hell was.

And it was through Ted that you met John Glenn.

Yes, I did. We met him, I'm trying to think if it was 1959 or '60, I'm not sure. It was in Washington and when he said, I want you to meet the next man going to the moon we all looked at each other and said, What the hell is he smoking? What was going on? Going to the moon? It

just didn't sound right back in those days. It was quite a thrill because John Glenn, some kind of wonderful person, from my conversations with him anyway. When we had the memorial services at Fenway (for Ted) I got to talking to John and I asked him what kind of pilot Ted was and he said he was the best pilot he's ever known. And (Ted's) a guy that never went to college. My oldest son is a pilot for American Airlines and all the calculus and all that math they had to take in college. But here he did it and I don't think they had calculus in high school back in those days. Wonderful eyesight. Naturally great instincts and I guess it's hard to teach instincts. We started talking about him, how he handled the plane, and then when he crash landed his jet where he had been shot when he was in Korea and (John) said to me, Boy he can run. I said, I don't think so. I mean, for three years I've never known him to have any speed. Anyway, he says when Ted landed that plane and he got the hell out of there you should have seen how quick he was. There are a million stories about Ted Williams.

Another great story is your no-hitter against the White Sox.

Oh yeah, of course Ted wasn't there on that one. This was 1962 and I hadn't won a game in a long time and we were flying over that day. We did a lot of that. You flew into the city and you played that day, sometimes in the afternoon, sometimes at night. I was sitting on the plane doing the crossword puzzle, struggling like hell with that and one of the stewardesses sat down and said, How are you doing?, and I said, I'm struggling with this puzzle. She goes, What position do you play, how you doing there? And I say, Pitcher and I'm struggling like hell with that one too. She got up and said, You'll pitch a no-hitter tonight. The umpire that game was a guy named **Bill McKinley** and we go into the ninth inning and I'm winning 1-0 and I get the first two guys. I struck out **Sherm Lollar** and **Nellie Fox** was on deck. He was pinch hitting and he's got this big smile and I don't want to look at him because I don't want to lose my concentration, that's what he was trying to do. And (Fox) hit this weak ground ball to (**Frank**) **Malzone** who threw him out. **Apparcio**, I got two quick strikes and then I threw him a slider maybe a foot and a half off the plate and I thought he swung and the umpire, McKinley called it, No, he didn't swing and as the ball was coming back to me from the catcher I heard somebody yell from the stands, They

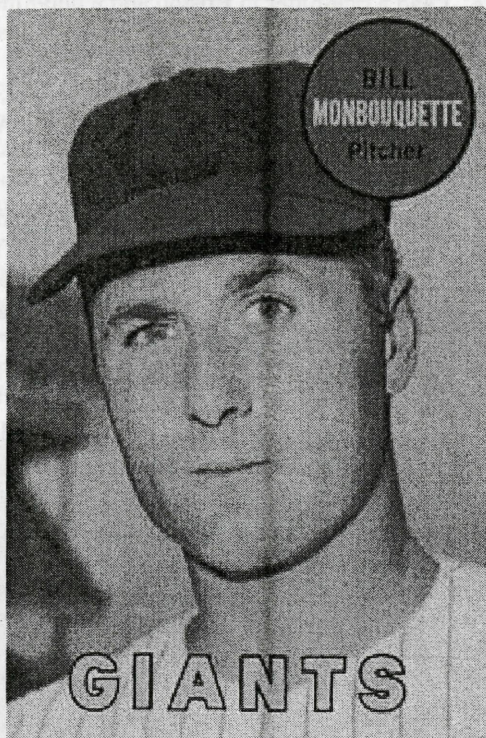
shot the wrong McKinley! Oh my god, I had to walk around off the mound. The next pitch I threw him another slider and he swung and missed and let me tell you something don't let anybody tell you that white people can't jump because I was way up off the ground. That was probably my greatest thrill. Winning 20 games was wonderful but nothing can beat that. I had a shot at two, three more. I had a one-hitter in Boston and a one-hitter in Minnesota, which I lost. You win some and you lose some.

That was a good stretch for you. You went to the All-Star three times in four years.

Yeah, well, I didn't pitch very well in the game in Kansas City in '60. I gave up three home runs. **Mays** led off the game. I sidearmed him and he bailed out and hit the ball down the right field line and it went for a triple. **Banks** hit a homerun off of me and **Crandall** hit a home run. That's why I tell kids I'm an authority on homeruns. I gave up 221 of them. I think that allows me to be an authority. One of the nicest things that ever happened to me, in the '60 All-Star game, we played two (games) back then, we would try to raise more money for the pension and we played in Kansas City in that game that I pitched in. I was the loser. Then right after the game we flew back to New York and had a day off and played the next day. We were sitting on the runway. It was hot. It was 120 at game time at the park and it was down in the hold which made it much hotter. We were sitting there. I can't recall what was wrong—a strike?—but there was a long delay, a couple of hours, and **Mantle** comes up to me—I was with the Red Sox—he says, I can't hit you. I know what you're going to throw me. I know where you're going to throw it and I can't hit it and I can't lay off of it. You know, sometimes when they try to con you? Like **Rocky Calavito** used to say, Hey, how's your family? Anyway, we get to New York and I was sitting in the lobby and it was around five o'clock and wondering what I was going to do. **Stan Musial** and four or five other guys come walking through the lobby and he says, What are you doing? I said, Just hanging around. He said, Have you eaten yet? I said, No. C'mon, you're going with us. You can't ask for a nicer thing to happen to you, to have Stan Musial ask you to go to dinner. Couldn't ask for a nicer guy. I got to know him through Mickey Mantle's Make a Wish Golf Tournament. What a wonderful guy. Always had time for the people. I like

that in a player. You always have to give back. That seems to be a thing of the past. There are certain people that do it. I like the way **David Ortiz** is with the fans.

You'd mentioned Willie Mays. You later played with the Giants. Did you get to know guys like Juan Marichal and Gaylord Perry and Mays?



Williams. **Carl Yastremski. Al Kaline. Whitey Ford. Willie Mays. Willie McCovey.** Juan Marichal and Gaylord Perry. I said, Do you know who those guys are? A couple of the guys said, Who are they? I said, They're all Hall of Famers and they didn't act like you idiots. That put their heads down real quick. I got to know Gaylord pretty well. I knew Willie when I was in charge of minor league pitching for the Mets. Willie was working for the Mets. I loved Willie, really a great guy. The greatest all-around player for me was Willie Mays. One time he hit a homerun against me in spring training in Scottsdale. I had just knocked him down real good and I hung him a curveball and Yaz was in leftfield and he hit the ball so far and so hard and Yaz never made an attempt to go for it. It was 360 down the line in Scottsdale. Yaz just put his head down. In a kidding way, when the

Oh yeah. One time I was coaching for the Blue Jays in St. Catherine's, Ontario in the New York-Penn League and some of our kids were running around and we had to bail them out of jail, so I took my pitching staff over to the bullpen and I started saying Ted

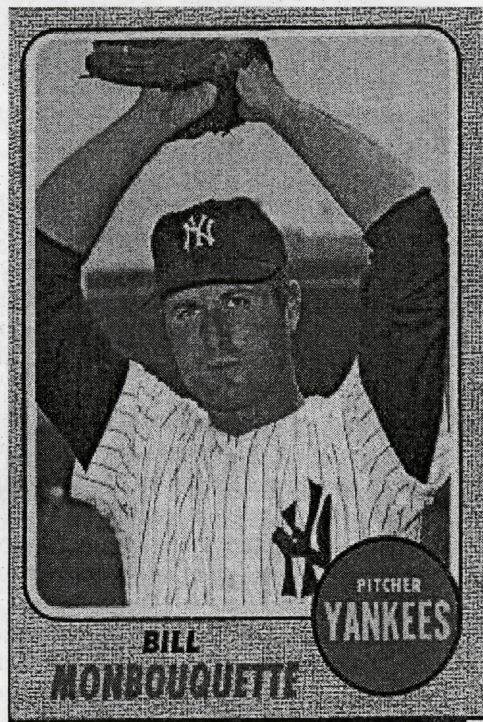
inning was over, I said, Hey, don't show me up, make an attempt for the ball. He said, That's over the swimming pool. There was a parking lot and then there was a swimming pool. Oh, it was a 500-foot shot. Then he hit one off of me over in Phoenix. It was a line drive. It was almost up on to the road and it hit the embankment out there and bounced all the way back to second base. What the hell's the difference if it's 500 feet or 320 feet, you know?

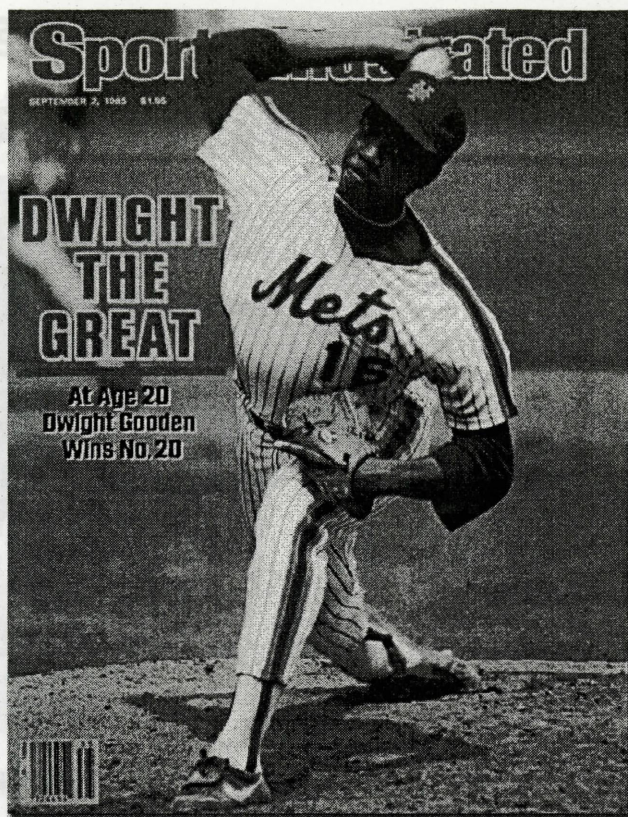
You were with the Yankees in '67 and '68 and I noticed that a lot of future managers and coaches—you, Bobby Cox, Dick Howser, Mel Stottlemyre—on those teams, which Ralph Houk managed. Is there any connection between the way he treated players and the fact that so many of them went on to be managers and coaches?

I'm sure everybody learned from him. He was a player's manager. He stuck up for the players. If there was a brawl on the field he was the first guy there. We all know his service background. He was a major. He was easy to talk to. I was Billy Martin's

coach; he wasn't very easy to talk to. If you're a guy's coach and you can't talk to the manager, it makes it tough. I loved him.

You also worked for the Mets when Doc Gooden came up.





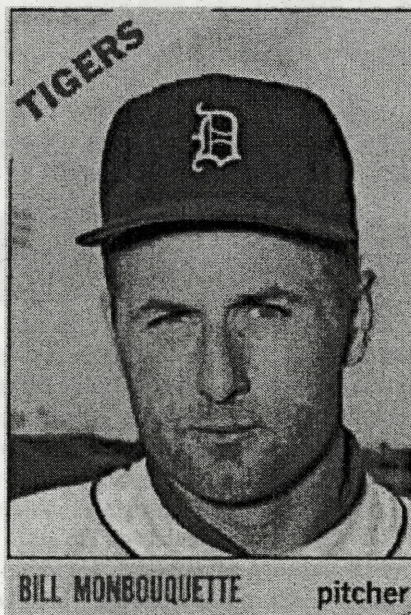
When he was in the minor leagues I was there. In the instructional league all I ever said to Doc was don't let anybody fool with your delivery. There are pitching coaches that are happy to change deliveries. It's hard to change someone who's been throwing a certain way all his life. You can make a couple of adjustments here and there. I know guys who have said, It's time to change the delivery. What the hell? If it ain't broke, don't fix it. One thing you don't hear pitching coaches say, like the old timers you used to say: Get after him. The hitter knows when you're not challenging him or getting after him. I remember Ted used to say, Well he's going to do this and on this count he's going to do that, he's going to pussyfoot and not give me anything to hit. That was his memory. I can remember as an 18-year-old kid sitting on the bench hearing Ted say, C'mon, we've got to get this club. It was at Fenway, you know. I had just signed. You got to get these guys here because we're going to Cleveland and we're going in to face the Nasty Boys: **Feller. Wynn. Lemon. Garcia. Narleski. Mossi.** It might have been the greatest pitching staff of all time.

And everybody would say, Yeah, sure, you really have trouble with those guys. He'd be talking about hitting and everything else. As an 18-year-old kid what the hell do you know about hitting? I said to myself, Did I make a mistake here in signing or what? That was a great experience to be around him, to listen to him talk. He'd talk about meeting **Babe Ruth**, and he did introduce me to **Ty Cobb** in Scottsdale, Arizona. That was probably '60 or '61 or so and he was wheeling Ty around in a wheelchair and I had just pitched nine innings against the Dodgers and got beat 1-0 or 2-1. **John Roseboro** hit a home run off me in the ninth inning and (Ty) said, I like the way you pitch, son, get right after 'em. How can you not remember that? Of course, I said, Thank you, sir.

One last thing: I see that when you were with the Tigers in '66 you stole a base.

Did I have one or two?

According to what I found you had one.



That was against Kansas City.

You have a pretty good memory of your pitching side, do you remember your stolen base?

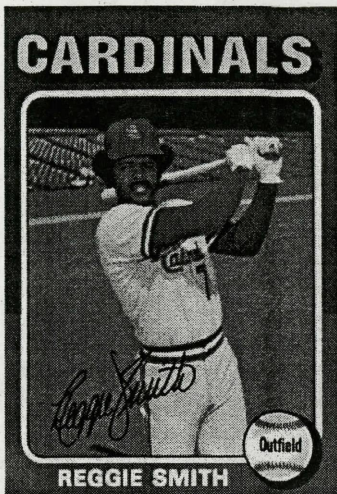
I guess I was with the Tigers when I stole that. That was in Kansas City. I remember the throw was high and **Bert Campaneris** and he tried to hit me on the top of the

head. And I gave him a little shove. The game has been great to me.

*Mike Faloon might just do the **Angel Pagan** wing flap dance before too long. In the meantime, he and his wife are expecting their second child in early June.*

Sutton, The Garv and Me.....The Reggie Smith Story by Tim Hinely

Back in my younger days there was only one Reggie as far as I was concerned. Forget **Reggie Jackson**. Yeah, he was "Mr. October," I'll give him that, but my money was always on **Reggie Smith**. Pure switch hitter, one of the strongest arms in history and most importantly, a quiet superstar who let his bat do the talking for him. Not sure what it was but if I can pinpoint it I think it was that baseball card with him wearing that cool red St. Louis Cardinals uniform. I am a diehard Pittsburgh Pirates fan but there was something about that Cardinals uniform that I always dug and Reggie wore it better than anyone.



Thing is Reggie only wore that red uniform for two and a half years (1974 to the middle of the 1976 season) but it was that 1975 Topps card that got me going. He debuted in 1966 with the Boston Red Sox (and came in second in Rookie of the Year voting in 1967) and spent the first eight seasons of his career with that team and while good, they were not his most productive years. His time in St.

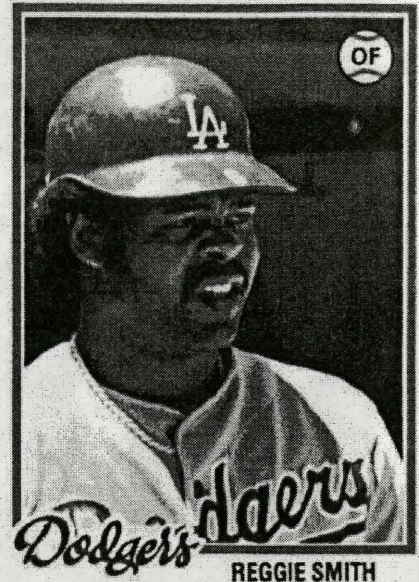
Louis was well spent. In 1974, his first year with the Cards, he hit 23 homers, had 100 runs batted in and batted .309. That was good enough to earn him 11th place in MVP voting. His first few years with his *next* team, the Los Angeles Dodgers, are when Reggie drove the point home (pun intended). In 1977 and 1978, he came in fourth in the MVP voting with a career-high 32 roundtrippers in '77. Can you say underrated?

My favorite Reggie story doesn't even directly involve Reggie. During the 1978 season the Dodgers were being the Dodgers (i.e. winning) but there was trouble in paradise. Their star pitcher, **Don Sutton**, had a serious distaste for their star slugger, **Steve Garvey**. One day Mr. Sutton made some public comments about how Reggie was the real MVP of that team, not the clean cut (yeah, right), All American star Garvey. One thing led to another

and Garvey approached Sutton and asked if the comments were true. Sutton replied that yes, they were true. After a few more choice words Sutton then jumped on Garvey and threw him into a row of lockers and the two went down. Each was trying to land punches but both ended up getting more scratch marks than

bruises and Garvey received the worst of it. The Garv got his ass handed to him (the only good thing about that guy was his wife, Cindy, who left him forumm.... musician **Marvin Hamlisch**). Sutton's quote said it all, "All you hear about on our team is Steve Garvey, the All-American boy. Well, the best player on this team for the last two years—and we all know it—is Reggie Smith. Reggie doesn't go out and publicize himself he tells the truth, even if it sometimes alienates people. He doesn't smile at the right people or say the right things. Reggie's not a façade or Madison Avenue image. He's a real person."

With 314 lifetime home runs, 2020 hits, 1092 rbi and a .287 lifetime batting average Reggie probably will not make the Hall of Fame (my pal Keith would say he belongs in the "Hall of Good") but let's take a moment out to remember a guy who was a terrific ballplayer, played hard, and was respected by his peers. Plus he was indirectly responsible for Steve Garvey getting his butt whooped. You can't ask for more than that.



Tim Hinely lives in Portland, Oregon where he publishes his own zine, Dagger. For a copy please write to daggerboy@prodigy.net.

The Zisk Book Corner by Steve Reynolds

Let me get this confession out of the way immediately—I'm a sucker for lists. I've done a couple of articles based on lists in these pages over the years, as well as doing my own Top 20 list-based music fanzine for 18 years. I used to transcribe what **Casey Kasem** counted down each week on *American Top 40* and only stopped once I learned he didn't want to do a dead dog dedication.

In any case, my fondness of lists doesn't make me the best person to review two new books about the Mets—*100 Things Mets Fans Should Know and Do Before They Die* by **Matthew Silverman** and *Mets by the Numbers* by **Jon Springer** and the same Matthew Silverman. Yet I think that even folks who write off lists as nothing but a cheap way to fill space would dig these fascinating books.

100 Things lines up the well known moments, people, places, events, games and records that hard core Mets fans probably have ingrained in their brains and adds a healthy dose of the obscure. Everybody knows the **Bill Bucker** ball (which is first on the list) and the Miracle Mets, but who knew that there was another **Murphy** besides Hall of Fame broadcaster **Bob** at the team's inception? (Um, not me.) And #70 on the list (dubbed "Lost in Translation") is a must read as it

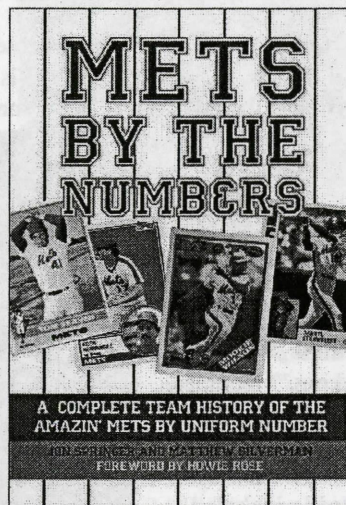
lists the 44 players who have played for the Mets and have also — like the fake moustache-wearing **Bobby Valentine** — spent time hitting or pitching in Japan.

Silverman excels at bringing these same quirky items from the team's history to light in a very easy to read, conversational style of writing that sounds like one smart fan who happens to sit next to you at a ballpark, and not like some drunk wiseass who claims he knows why **Aaron Heilman** pitches like hell every other game. (Oh, wait, that's *every person* at Shea this season.)

Speaking of Shea, Silverman spends his final 10 points talking about the ballpark the Amazin's have inhabited for the past 44 years—and somehow makes it sound a whole

lot better than my ass and my back have been experiencing since 1985. The stadium has seen its share of criticism over the years but Silverman puts a nice face on the dump, um, I mean ballpark with an insightful guide to the best seats, the best tailgating and the other greats who have called Shea home. (**The Beatles** anyone?) *100 Things* isn't essential for the over-the-top Mets fan, but it's a perfect introduction for someone just learning the joy and agony that being a Mets fan entails.

Silverman teamed up with **Jon Springer**, the head honcho of the great Mets site called *Mets By the Numbers* (www.mbtn.net), for the book that carries the same



name. While Silverman's other book of this year can be enjoyed by the casual Mets fan, *Mets by the Numbers* is a must read for anyone who's lost sleep over a **Willie Randolph** move, a **Doug Sisk** pitch or an appearance by the immortal # 51, **Mel Rojas**. This book breaks down the team's history by uniform number and brings up name after name that I thought years of abusing my body had

made me forget. **Kane Davis**? (#48) **Esix Sneed**? (#23) **Roberto Petagine**? (#20) From the biggest stars down to the one day minor league call-ups, all the players are in here along with who produced the best stats while wearing each number. It's a fascinating way to dissect a team's history and give it a fresh spin.

Simply put, *Mets by the Numbers* is the best book I have ever read about my favorite sports team of all time. After you finish *Zisk*, head to your favorite local, independent book store and track down a copy. And you too will know the greatest # 40 in Mets history. (Trust me, that's not really high praise for that number.)

Steve Reynolds is the co-editor of Zisk, and his favorite number is 24, like, um, that ballplayer named Mays.

Peace in the NL East by Mike Faloon

A hot stove dinner for a minor league team is a strange affair. You're there—fans, team employees, sportswriters, local high school and college players—to celebrate the *idea* of a team, in this case the Syracuse Chiefs, more than the team itself, the players. There are no members of the 2008 Chiefs players at the dinner. It's February. Pitchers and catchers have yet to report to major league training camp. MLB rosters are still undetermined and no one can say with any certainty which players will be sent to Triple A Syracuse. In truth, no one wants to play for the Chiefs in the coming season. They want to make it to the parent club, the Blue Jays, the Chiefs' major league affiliate. "No one really wants to play here!" is common knowledge, and yet the mood at the Chief's 47th annual Hot Stove Dinner, which doubles as a fundraiser for a local charity, is festive. Baseball is on the horizon and everyone gathered at the Holiday Inn is chomping at the bit for the season to begin.

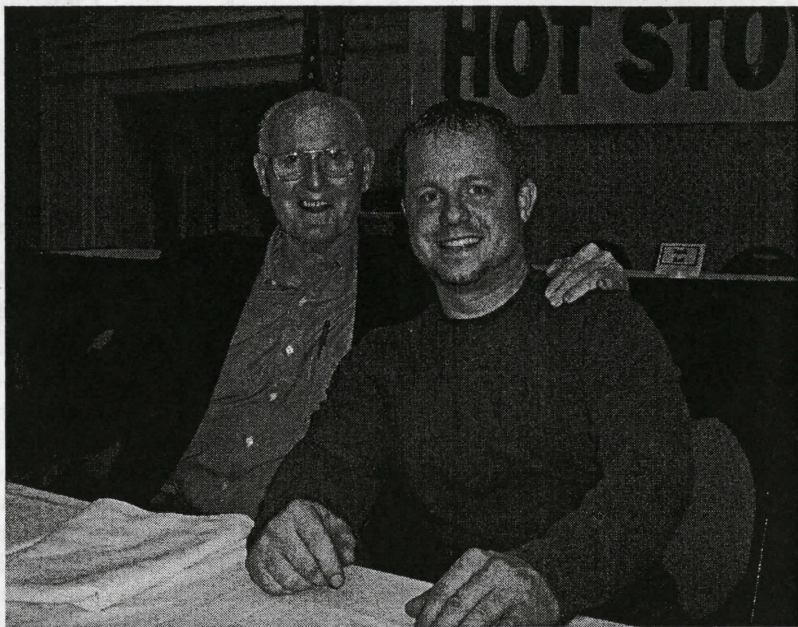
I have to keep that generous, celebratory spirit in mind because the evening's keynote speaker is Braves manager **Bobby Cox**. You may shrug with indifference. You may think, "Cool, a Hall of Famer in the making." Not me. I'm a Mets fan. Orange and blue courses through my veins and Bobby Cox has inflicted more damage on the Mets than any one else, **Bobby Bonilla** included.

When my brother and I arrive at the dinner we buy a couple of LaBatts—Syracuse drinks more of the stuff than any city outside of Toronto—and cruise the auction items. I distract myself with a **Sal Fasano** game-used batting helmet. (How best to convince the Mrs. that our mantle needs to be adorned with Sal's sweat-soaked brain bucket?) My brother, **Casey** is giddy. (*Ed note: Casey is pictured above with Bill Monbouquette, who's mentioned to the right and interviewed on page 10. A bit confusing we confess, but a great photo, right?*) He loves being immersed in baseball, the talk, the detritus, the luminaries looming everywhere we look—unburdened by what to do about Bobby Cox. "Check it out," he says, scanning the

program of auction items, "a **Mariano Rivera** autographed baseball." When Casey, a Red Sox fan at the front of the line of extremists, looks at anything Yankee-related without seeing crosshairs the flags of diplomacy are surely flapping in the breeze.

Our food is served as the high school and college pre-season players of the year are honored. (I love awards given in anticipation of performance—"Dudes, we think you're going to kick ass this year, take a trophy!") Bobby Cox introduces each kid and poses for pictures. He's aloof at first, uncertain where to turn for the photos, but he seems genuine. He chats with each recipient, his smile broad and his cheeks rosy, none of which fits the profile of a villain.

The evening moves along. The speakers are funny,



especially **Bill Monbouquette**, a former Red Sox pitcher. The **Jake Myers Great Guy Award** is given and then there is the final item for auction: the autographed **Mariano Rivera** ball. The opening bid is too expensive for the room. Heads turn to see who'll take the plunge. Before the lack of response becomes uncomfortable a hand raises and of course it's Bobby Cox, sparing us the shame of being unwilling or, more likely, unable to buy the ball.

It's a kind gesture and the applause isn't thunderous but its well past polite.

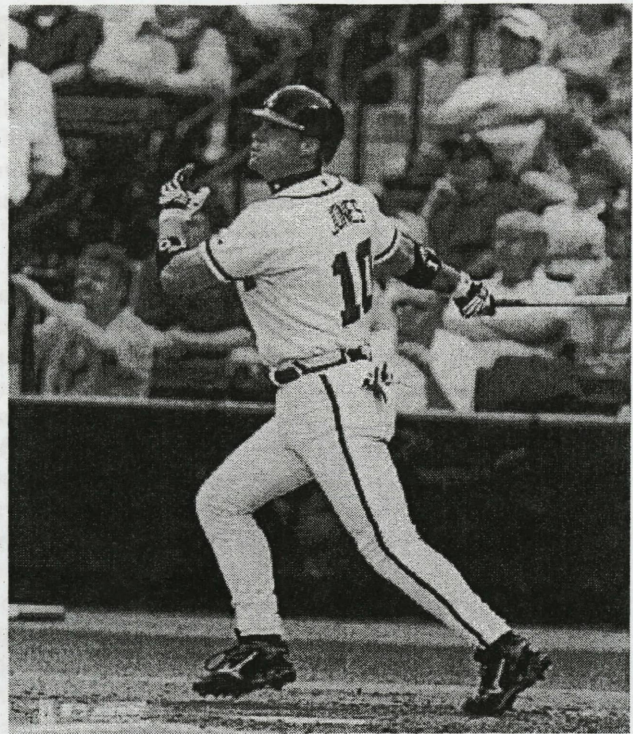
Frank Tepedino, former Chief, former Yankee, is the speaker just before Bobby Cox. They met as teammates and Tepedino, Teppy to his friends, who later played for Cox, relates how kind his former manager was when delivering the news that he, Teppy, had been traded.

Bobby Cox laughs as he steps to the podium. "I kind of started liking myself after hearing Teppy talk." Before he breaks into his speech Cox gives away the Rivera ball. It's not surprising that he gives the ball to a kid but then he makes the kid, who's wearing a Yankee jersey, say, on mic, that the 2008 Braves will win the World Series.

Like everyone else attending the dinner, I smile, laugh, and applaud. Any decent human being would do the same. But I'm something less than a decent human being when it comes to the Braves. They've squashed the Mets dreams many times over, and Cox is the man who signs the line up card every night. He's the skipper responsible for sending **Chipper "I Named My Child 'Shea' and, On My Website, I Inexplicably Find Myself Explaining What 'Fern' Is" Jones** onto the field nearly 2000 times over the past decade. I've cursed Bobby Cox hundreds of times. Disparaged his skills, questioned his manhood, been, in nearly all ways, unfair. And here I am applauding him. My grudge has washed away and Cox isn't done.

Cox tells jokes and shares anecdotes. He talks about how he thinks of long time Chiefs owner **Tex Simone** every time the Braves experience a rain delay. ("Let's get this game in, there's a lot of fans coming.") He even thanks the **Ross** family. They own the local Twin Trees pizzerias and they used to live in the neighborhood where I grew up. They were on my paper route and they'd always forget to cancel their subscription when they went south for the winter. The papers would pile up on their porch but they'd make up for it with generous tips. All those years of bringing the *Herald Journal* to Mr. and Mrs. Ross and now I find out that Bobby Cox and I have mutual acquaintances.

Cox's stories all involve him but they're not tainted by ego. He graciously plays the role of baseball celebrity, patiently waiting to hang out with his buddies, talk about



the good old days, make fun of the old teammate now wearing Velcro loafers, while tossing back a few beers. I don't lead the standing ovation Cox receives when he finishes his speech but I join in.

Epilogue: My brother and I linger after the dinner is over. Casey wants his picture taken with Tex Simone. And Teppy. And Bill Monbouquette. He's still giddy. He nudges me into approaching Bobby Cox for a picture. "C'mon, it'll make a great cover for the zine." I know he's right.

"Hey, Bobby, do you have time for a picture?"

"Sure thing." Cox turns to pose and politely puts his arm around my shoulder.

"I have to tell you, Bobby, that I'm a Mets fan.

My brother snaps the picture.

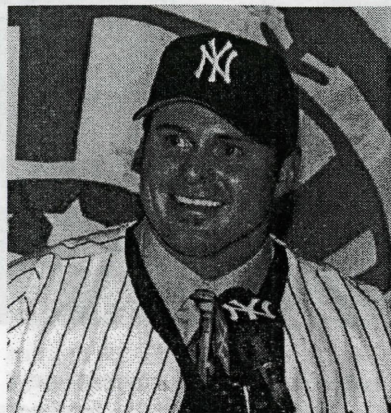
Cox shakes my hand and flashes a knowing smile. "I love the Mets, especially when we beat them."

Curse of the Great ~~Bambino~~ Giambi by Mark Hughson

It goes without saying that anyone who reads or writes for *Zisk* enjoys the game of baseball. And while I feel disappointed when my team loses, and get a thrill out of the big games in October, baseball is something I don't take personally. You don't like the A's? I'm ok with that. Or take **Barry Bonds**, he might be a jerk but he never personally disrespected me so I got no real beef with him. Overall I'd say my relationship with baseball is positive and healthy except for this one guy **Jason Giambi**—he's a douchebag.

The year was 2001 and the season had just finished. Giambi was named MVP in 2000, and in the '01 season he continued his All-Star/Silver Slugger performance. The guy was in his prime and a hot commodity. After the 2001 season he was a free agent. Oakland's paltry budget couldn't hang on to him (a running theme we've seen persist with **Miguel Tejada** and **Barry Zito**). So his contract was up, and he was moving to a new team. I was ok with that,

being a realist after all. He signed with the Yankees, and I was fine with that too. When asked by the press why he chose to sign with the Yankees, Giambi said, "I want to play for a contender, I want to play for a competitive team." What a fucking prick! The A's had been duking it out in the toughest division in all of baseball for most of the late '90s. They were gaining momentum, finally constructing both a solid lineup and that **Hudson-Mulder-Zito** starting rotation, and in the last two years before Giambi left, won the division or the wild card spot and played against other playoff teams with twice (or in the case of the Yankees, thrice) their team salary. Although I was a couple thousand miles away just sitting in front of the TV, I felt emotionally confused, disrespected, and deeply insulted on behalf on myself, the Athletics organization, and the rest of their fans. I didn't know it at the time, perhaps it was a subconscious act, but I had just cursed the Yankees. I never before had taken the game to heart but when I heard Giambi spew that crap I just shook my head and said, "Fuck that guy." For as long as Giambi wears pinstripes, the Yanks will never win a World Series. You may think this is just a gag, but in baseball, stats hold weight, and I'll let the numbers do the talking from now on.



The Oakland Athletics

1999 – finished 2nd in division
2000 – West Division title
2001 – Wild Card winner

Giambi leaves Oakland A's

2002 – West Division title
2003 – West Division title
2004 – finished 2nd in division
2005 – finished 2nd in division
2006 – West Division title
2007 – finished 10 games below .500

The New York Yankees

1999 – World Series winner
2000 – World Series winner
2001 – AL Pennant winner

Giambi signs with Yankees

2002 – Lost ALDS to Angels
2003 – Lost WS to Marlins
2004 – Lost ALCS to Red Sox
2005 – Lost ALDS to Angels
2006 – Lost ALDS to Tigers
2007 – Lost ALDS to Indians

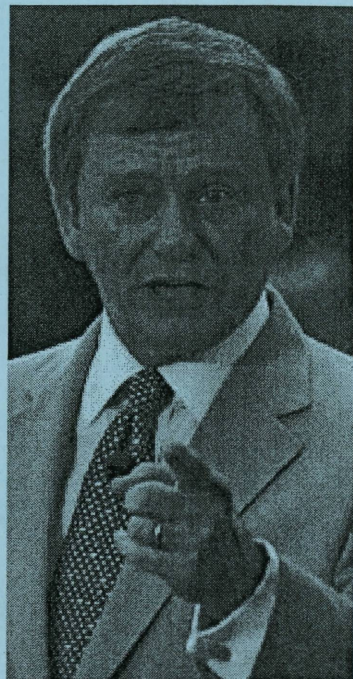
Upstate NY native **Mark Hughson** has been writing about baseball and music for almost a dozen years. His worthless baseball card collection consisting of Topps cards from 1987-1994 is up for sale - contact markhughson@hotmail.com

Zisk Picture Quiz: Which Person Had an Affair With the Rocket?

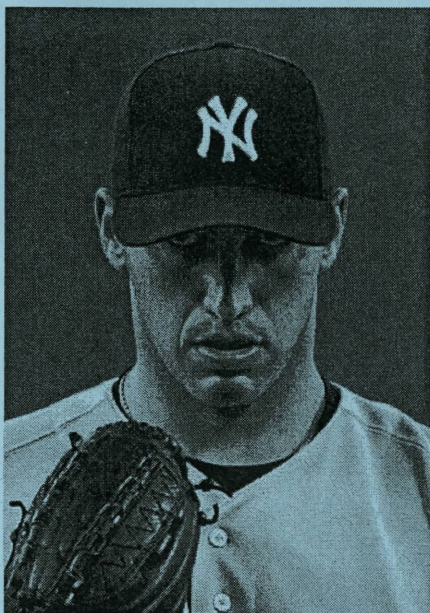
A.



B.



C.

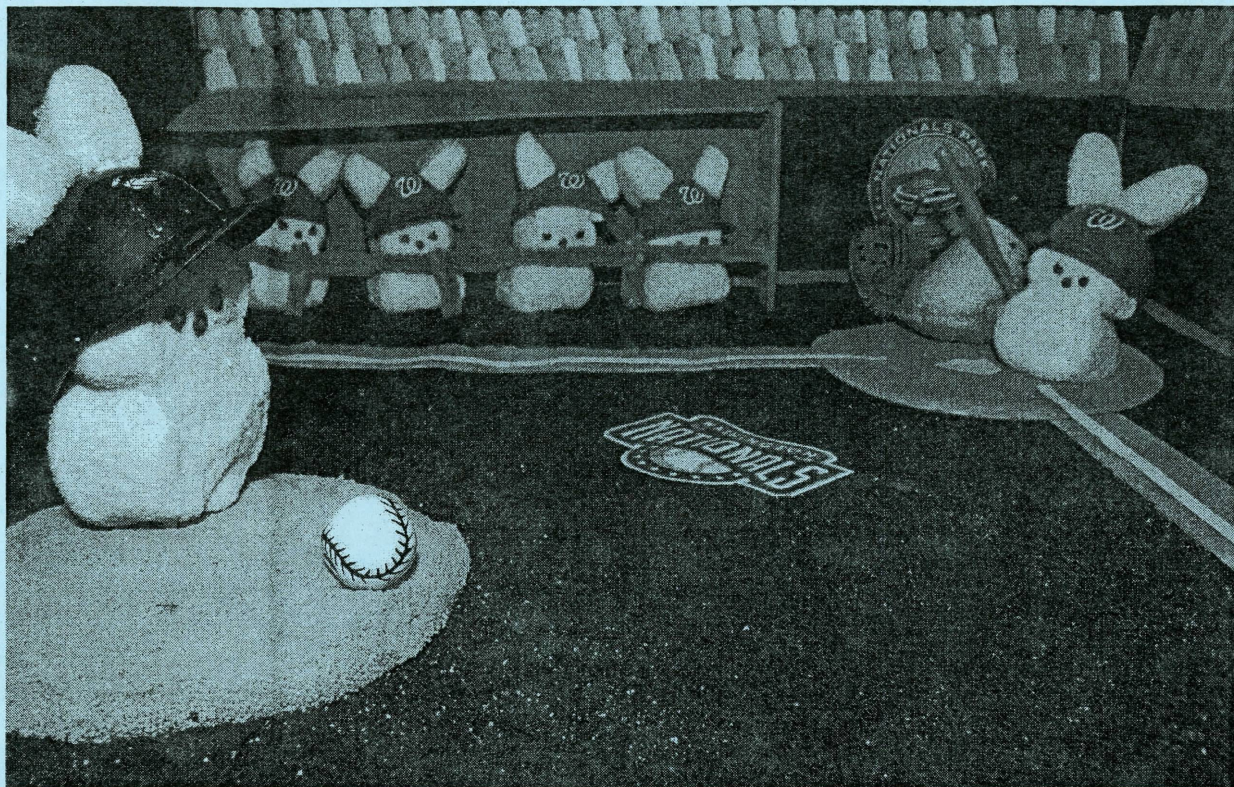


D.



Answer: It's a trick question. Rockets go into space, they don't have sex.

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Zisk writer **Dr. Nancy Golden** and her friend **Erin Williams** submitted this to the *Washington Post* for their annual “Peeps Diorama” contest, where the best peep wins \$100. Here’s their (non-winning) description for *Ryan Peeperman's First At-Bat at Nationals Park*:

“Long-time peepophiles and new-found Nats fans, we've been holding onto our tiny batting helmets (purchased at a Nationals game, of course) all through the off-season in preparation. With tickets sold-out, this may be as close as we get to Opening Day. Though \$100 worth of beer and hotdogs would go a long way towards consoling us.”