

# History of the National League 1876 – 1900

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This e-book covers the **National League**'s first 25 years – before what is now known as the “modern era” (1901 to present).

**Teams highlighted in red** were either new to the NL, changed their name, or had moved from another city.

# National League

## 1876

<b>Standings</b>		<b>ERA</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>FA</b>
Chicago White Stockings	52-14		.329	
St. Louis Maroons	45-19	1.22		.902
Hartford Dark Blues	47-21			
<b>Boston</b> Red Caps/Quakers	39-31			
Louisville Colonels/Grays	30-36			
New York Mutuals	21-35			
Philadelphia Athletics	14-45			
Cincinnati Red Legs	9-56			

### League:

- **National League** originated on December 17, 1875 – with Hulbert and Spalding forming a league constitution. Prior to 1880, players customarily signed 1-year contracts, and could sign on with another club the following year. Civil war veteran **Morgan Bulkeley** served as NL's 1<sup>st</sup> president.

RULE: Players could move up a base if fly was caught in foul ground.

RULE: Fair/foul: Infield balls that hit fair and rolled foul were considered fair. Rule changed prior to 1877 season.

RULE: No substitutions could be made after the 4<sup>th</sup> inning.

- **Season:** 70-game schedule. Each team was to play 10 games vs. each opponent
- **Curveball** was already in use.
- **Pitchers** could throw sidearm until 1884 and take short run prior to pitching. Distance to plate was 45'.
- **Spalding Company** provided NL with baseballs.
- A stance perhaps perfected by CWS catcher Deacon White: with 0 men on base and less than 2 strikes, the catcher stood well behind plate (10-15') and caught the ball on the bounce
- Captains of visiting teams were permitted to choose among **designated hometown umpires**. Through 1882, umpires were paid \$5/game.
- If ball entered the stands, fans were required to return ball quickly or delay the game.

4/22: 1<sup>st</sup> NL game: Boston Quakers beat Philadelphia 6-5.

4/25: **Chicago** beat Louisville 4-0 (Spalding 3-hitter). League's 1<sup>st</sup> shutout.

5/13: **Hartford** defeated NY 28-3.

6/14: **Boston** (24) vs. St Louis (16). Both teams combined to commit ML record 40 errors.

7/22: **Chicago** beat Louisville 30-7. Club collected 31 hits. McVey: 6-7/2B. Louisville P John Ryan threw 10 wild pitches.

7/25: **Chicago** beat Cincinnati 23-3. McVey: 6-7/2B. CWS collected 26 hits.

8/17: **St. Louis** and **George Bradley** beat Chicago 3-0 – Bradley's 15<sup>th</sup> of 16 shutouts.

- **Boston** was only club to play full 70G schedule
- **Fielding** was still an art, not a science – Louisville averaged 7 errors/game; NY committed 473 errors (8+ game)
- **Cincinnati** lost 18 games in a row. Club established 2<sup>nd</sup> worst record ever (worst: 1899)
- P **George Bradley** (45-19) led NL in shutouts (16), ERA (1.23) and fewest hits per 9 innings.
- **Philadelphia** club lasted 1 year. Another franchise entered NL in 1883.
- Once season ended, Hulbert terminated **NY Mutuals** and **Philadelphia** franchises for avoiding late season travel. Unable to cover costs traveling west, the teams chose to play exhibitions or final games at home to increase revenue.
- **George Bechtel** was expelled from Louisville for throwing games and eliciting bribes.
- **Boston Braves** were re-named the Red Caps
- Cincinnati P **William "Cherokee" Fisher** was a POW at the infamous Confederate prison at Andersonville (Georgia).
- **First year** for OF Jim O'Rourke (Hall of Fame,1945). **Final year** for Philadelphia P **Dick McBride**. McBride served with a military company from Pennsylvania during the Civil War.

# National League

## 1877

<b>Standings</b>		<b>ERA</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>FA</b>
Boston	42-18	2.15	.296	
Louisville	35-25			.904
Hartford	31-27			
St. Louis	28-32			
Chicago	26-33			
Cincinnati	15-42			

### League:

White Stocking's president **William Hulbert** succeeded **Morgan Bulkeley** as NL's 2<sup>nd</sup> president – handed club operations over to **Albert Spalding**. Hulbert's chief demand was integrity of the game. Hulbert entered Hall of Fame in 1995.

RULE: Until 1883, foul balls caught *on the bounce* was ruled an out.

RULE: Fair/foul: Ball that landed fair but rolled foul was ruled foul ball.

Chicago's Ross Barnes had been adept at bunting a ball fair for a hit, despite it rolling foul.

RULE: A walk was counted as a hit.

RULE: Wild pitches and passed balls were counted as errors.

RULE: Home team submitted names of 3 approved local men as candidates prior to game.

Visiting player would choose umpire by picking his name out of a hat.

5/12: Chicago lost to Boston 18-9. White Stockings committed 21 errors; Boston committed 11.

- Chicago dominated Cincinnati. Winning scores included 21-7, 15-1, 13-1, 13-9, 12-5, 12-7, 11-6, and 10-3.
- Boston pulverized Chicago pitching – winning by scores of 18-4, 18-9, 13-5, 11-9, 9-7, and 8-3.
- New NL policy: players were charged \$30 for uniforms.  
Food money for away games was 50c/day and was deducted from their salaries.
- Before 1878, NL would only accept franchises in cities with populations greater than 75,000.
- League initiated a 60-game schedule.
- **Catcher's masks** were introduced. Catchers previously wore a simple mouth guard.
- Boston P Tommy Bond won pitcher's Triple Crown (40-17. 2.11)
- Not so good in the field: Louisville OF Orator Shafer: .831 FA
- Powerful **International League** (aka IL) was formed.
- Three teams left the NL: Hartford (.619 in 2 years), St. Louis (.589 in 2 years) and Cincinnati.  
Hartford Dark Blues played home games at Brooklyn's Union Grounds.  
Cincinnati club committed 394 errors in 58G (.851) – almost 7/game
- Two months after the season ended, **Cincinnati's** games were thrown out; club didn't pay \$100 dues.  
Team eventually disbanded.
- **Louisville** began season 27-12, but Boston won 13 of last 15 games to win pennant.
- Louisville suspended OF **George Bechtel** for drunkenness.  
Bechtel was later banned for attempting to bribe a NY Mutual player.  
P **Jim Devlin** pitched all innings for his team. Devlin was one of 4 Grays expelled for suspicious play at end of season.
- Louisville players had been approached by gamblers and conspired to lose 3 ½ game lead on August 13<sup>th</sup> with 12 left to play. Club lost every game on road trip.

**Outcome:** Four players (aka "**Louisville Crooks**") were banned for life for conspiring to throw pennant to Boston. Of the four involved (P Devlin, 2B Joseph Gerhard, 3B Al Nichols, and SS Bill Craver), three confessed to their "crime." Craver, a shortstop, was already saddled with a shady reputation while playing for Troy Haymakers years earlier.

**First Year:** Orator Shaffer, P Will White

# National League

## 1878

Standings		ERA	BA	FA
Boston	41-19			.914
Cincinnati	37-23	1.84		
<b>Providence</b>	33-27			
Chicago	30-30		.290	
<b>Indianapolis</b>	24-36			
<b>Milwaukee</b>	15-45			

### League:

- Three new NL entries: **Providence Grays**, **Milwaukee Cream City Grays**, and **Indianapolis Hoosiers**. Both the Grays and Hoosiers lasted 1 year. Milwaukee team suffered 14G losing streak. Another Indianapolis franchise surfaced in 1887.
- Grays OF **Paul Hines** was NL's 1<sup>st</sup> Triple Crown winner (4 HRs, 50 RBIs, .358 BA). Hines' BA crown was in dispute with Milwaukee's **Abner Dalrymple** (.354)
- NL was staffed with 18 umpires. Clubs were to arrange one to work games (see 77?)
- Former Chicago White Stockings P **Al Spalding** played 1 game, then turned his energies over to sporting goods and annual editions of the Spalding Guide – the forerunner to *The Sporting News*.
- Chicago White Stockings manager **Joe Ferguson** was given colorful nickname, "Death to Flying Things."

9/2: Chicago White Stockings & P Al Spalding lost 5-3 to Boston in benefit game for yellow-fever victims in Memphis, TN.

9/23: **Chicago White Stockings** lost to Indianapolis 9-7.  
Home umpire Joseph Julian escaped angry Chicago fans after the game.

**First Year:** SS/P John Ward (Hall of Fame 1964), a lawyer in his own right, was an ardent foe of MLB's reserve clause.

- **Boston** placed 6<sup>th</sup> in Hits, 5<sup>th</sup> in batting (.241), 4<sup>th</sup> in Runs & Slugging, 3<sup>rd</sup> in ERA, but 1<sup>st</sup> in fielding and fewest runs allowed
- Providence OF **Paul Hines** completed an unassisted triple play. Providence benched **Dick Higham** for suspicious play. Higham's reputation and underhanded activity later led to his expulsion while serving as an AA umpire in 1882. Higham previously played for the Chicago White Stockings of the NAPBBP in 1875.
- Independent League's Buffalo Bisons featured P **Pud Galvin**. Galvin's 1878 record (72-25) included 96 complete games, and approximately 900 innings pitched. Galvin went 10-5 vs. NL teams.

# National League

## 1879

<b>Standings</b>		<b>ERA</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>FA</b>
Providence	59-25	2.19	.296	
Boston	54-30	2.19		.913
<b>Buffalo</b>	46-32			
Chicago	46-33			
Cincinnati	43-37			
<b>Cleveland</b>	27-55			
<b>Syracuse</b>	22-48			
<b>Troy</b>	19-56			

### League:

RULE: It took **9 balls** to walk a batter. Rule was amended in 1880.

RULE: Batting order rules were instituted and followed.

- Pitchers box reduced to 4' in width (from 6' wide)
- Pitchers *were fined* for hitting batters.
- **Umpires** called pitches strike, ball, or foul.
  - Batters with 2 strikes were called out if the foul ball was caught on the 1<sup>st</sup> bounce.
  - Until 1883, the visiting team were tasked to pay umpire's fees and expenses.
  - NL came up with 20 umpire candidates living in or near team's locations.
- NL raised schedule to 84 games.
- **Cleveland Blues, Buffalo Bisons, Troy Trojans, and Syracuse Stars** were added.
  - Milwaukee left before the season began; Syracuse folded at seasons end.
  - Cincinnati Reds folded but re-organized for 1880 season.
  - Buffalo** franchise came from powerful International League. The team was 10-7 vs. NL squads in 1878.
  - Bisons included future 300-game winner **Pud Galvin** (361-308).

**Reserve clause:** Introduced secretly by Boston Braves owner **Arthur Soden**, the clause allowed each team to protect (reserve) 5 players – thereby making them unavailable to other clubs. In short: A player could negotiate only with one club – the current one that listed him on the “reserve list.” Other clubs could not tamper with a reserved player by offering him a more attractive salary. Unless his contract was sold, traded, or terminated, the player remained reserved forever, even after he had formally retired from the game.

The clause was intentionally one-sided. Owners could to set salary levels and eliminate player's freedom of movement. The clause survived the formation of start-up leagues (Players League) and unions, and was even protected by the Supreme Court until a landmark ruling by an arbiter in 1975 eliminated it.

6/2: Worcester P **Lee “Ruby Legs” Richmond** tossed a 7-inning 11-0 no-hitter vs. Chicago.  
Worcester was minor league team in 1879.

6/21: 1B **William Edward White** of Providence Grays was believed to be the 1<sup>st</sup> black to play in major leagues.  
White played only 1 game.

9/9: **Boston** beat Chicago White Stockings 10-0 on **Tommy Bond's no-hitter** - Bond's 11<sup>th</sup> shutout of season.

**First Year:** 1B **Dan Brouthers**, P **Pud Galvin**,

# National League

## 1880

<b>Standings</b>		<b>ERA</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>FA</b>
Chicago	67-17		.279	.913
Providence Grays	52-32	1.64		
Cleveland Blues	47-37			
Troy Trojans	41-42			
<b>Worcester</b>	40-43			
Boston	40-44			
Buffalo Bisons	24-58			
Cincinnati Reds	21-59			

### League:

RULE: **Walk** was now 8 balls (reduced from 9). Number would change often during decade.

RULE: For a batter to be **called out on strikes**, the pitch must be caught without having bounced.

RULE: If **home team** held the lead after the top of the 9<sup>th</sup>, they were no longer required to bat in the bottom of the inning.

RULE: It was **not** an automatic HR if the ball was hit over the fence – it depended on the park's ground rules.

- Catchers such as **Buck Ewing** began the customary squatting position behind home plate.
  - Two new pitches were introduced: **the screwball** (aka fadeaway) and **the knuckleball**. Both would be improved upon in the early 1900s.
  - The **Batting Average** was introduced to measure a hitter's success.
  - NL added the **Worcester Ruby Legs**. **Washington** franchise was denied NL membership.
  - **George Wright** illegally jumped from the Providence club to play for Boston.
  - Troy Trojans included (2) future 300+ game winners: rookie **Tim Keefe** (342-225) and **Mickey Welch** (307-210). Neither did well vs. CWS. Keefe went 26-35 and Welch 34-41.
- 5/7: **Chicago** beat Cincinnati 20-7. Chicago's George Gore went 6-6 and scored 5 times. Club scored 10 runs in 1<sup>st</sup> inning.
- 5/27: **Chicago** beat Buffalo 11-0. Chicago's 13<sup>th</sup> straight win.
- 7/8: **Chicago** beat Providence 5-4 (Corcoran). CWS' **21<sup>st</sup> straight win**. Chicago's record at 35-3.
- 8/28: **Cincinnati** committed 9 errors in 4<sup>th</sup> inning vs. Troy.  
Post-season fallout: **Cincinnati franchise was expelled** from NL by William Hulbert for not obeying the rules (i.e. Reds sold beer and leased the park for Sunday play). The club disbanded then later reorganized.
- Two well-known rowdies on the same team: Arlie Latham and **Charles Comiskey** both played for St. Louis of the AA. Comiskey was known to run up and down 3<sup>rd</sup> base line insulting and swearing at the opposition.

**First Year:** C Buck Ewing, 1B Roger Connor, P Tim Keefe, P Mickey Welch

# National League

## 1881

<b>Standings</b>		<b>ERA</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>FA</b>
Chicago	56-28		.295	
Providence	47-37	2.40		
Buffalo	45-38			
<b>Detroit</b>	41-43			
Troy	39-45			.917
Boston	38-45			
Cleveland	36-48			
Worcester	32-50			

### **League:**

RULE: **Walk** was reduced to 7 balls. Rule was revised 1884, 1886, and finally 1889.

RULE: Distance from home plate to pitcher's mound was increased from 45' to 50'.

- Runner was no longer called out when returning to base following a foul ball.  
Prior to this rule, runner had to return quickly before ball was relayed to pitcher or be called out.
- NL added the **Detroit Wolverines**.

### **Chicago lore:**

White Stockings out-scored 2<sup>nd</sup>-place Providence 105-56. Lowly Cleveland out-scored Chicago 55-54.  
Club led in BA (.295; 2<sup>nd</sup> place: Buffalo .264), Runs, Hits, 2B, and Slugging. Pitching: 2<sup>nd</sup> in ERA and shutouts. Fielding: 2<sup>nd</sup>.  
Chicago began the season 26-10 and ended 24-10.

- Three **Providence** players were banned for drinking: Emil Goss, Sadie Houck, and Lew Brown.

5/20: **Chicago beat Boston** 5-4. With only one umpire officiating and his back turned to watch the ball in play, Mike "King" Kelly scored from 2<sup>nd</sup> without coming close to touching 3<sup>rd</sup> (see King Kelly, 1880).

9/27: **Chicago beat Troy** 10-8. Played in the rain, only 12 were in attendance – **fewest ever to attend ML game**.

**First Year:** P Hoss Radbourn, P Tony Mullane

# National League

## 1882

	<b>Standings</b>	<b>ERA</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>FA</b>
Chicago	55-29	2.22	.277	
Providence	52-32			
Buffalo	45-39			.910
Boston	45-39			.910
Cleveland	42-40			
Detroit	42-41			
Troy	35-48			
Worcester	18-66			

### League:

RULE: From 1876-1881, umpires could confer with spectators or players if he could not determine if the ball was caught.

RULE: Only the team captain could confer with umpire.

4/10: NL's 2<sup>nd</sup> president, **William Hulbert** died at 49 and was replaced by **Arthur Soden** on an interim basis.

- **Reserve clause** was expanded to 11 players.
- NL attempted to color-code position players. Those items given specific colors were the caps, shirts, and belts.  
**Catchers** (scarlet), **Pitchers** (light blue), **1B** (scarlet and white stripes), **2B** (orange and blue stripes), **3B** (blue and white stripes or gray and white stripes), **SS** (maroon), **LF** (white), **CF** (red and black), **RF** (gray).

Idea ended in June. Instead, NL allowed colored *single-colored uniforms* instead of by position: Chicago was white, Boston wore red, Buffalo gray, Cleveland navy blue, Detroit gold, Providence light blue, Troy green, and Worcester brown.

7/24: **Chicago** beat Cleveland 35-4. Blues were using OF turned-pitcher Dave Rowe.  
Six CWS players scored 4+ runs; Mike "King" Kelly and 6 others collected 4 hits/ea.  
Ugly game: 10 CWS reached on an error; 6 Blues reached on an error. Margin of victory is ML record.

9/30: **Chicago** beat Buffalo 6-5. White Stockings 16 y/o Milt Scott went 2-5 at bat with run scored.

- **Gone by season's end:** Worcester and Troy. Troy suffered 16G losing streak; Worcester lost 14 in row.  
The two teams were replaced by **New York Gothams** (later Giants) and **Philadelphia Quakers** (later Phillies).

**American Association** (aka Beer & Whiskey League) formed and raided NL teams of players.

Once the NL recognized the AA, the piracy ceased. The two leagues then signed the National Agreement of 1883.

Two teams from the AA remain today: **Cincinnati Red Stockings** and the **St. Louis Brown Stockings** (later Cardinals).

**Cincinnati Reds** were first called Red Stockings. St. Louis club was first known as the Brown Stockings.

- One early AA star was the ambidextrous P **Tony "The Apollo of the Box" Mullane** (284-220).  
Mullane won 30+ games 6 times.

- The new league's reputation was soured due to rampant **rowdyism**.  
Brown's **Arlie Latham** and **Charlie Comiskey** were notorious for foul, rough play.

Serving as a coach, Comiskey was often seen running up and down 3<sup>rd</sup> base line insulting the opposition.

As a strategist, 1B Comiskey played off the bag, leaving pitchers to cover 1<sup>st</sup> on ground balls hit to the 1B.

He also shifted players according to the batter's strength and later added 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base coaches.

Comiskey stayed with Browns from 1882-91 (1 year in Players League).

- AA was the 1<sup>st</sup> to hire a full staff of umpires with more generous pay and per diem expenses. NL followed suit in 1883.  
One umpire, infamous **Richard Higham**, was barred from baseball for indicating to gamblers when to bet on the games he was officiating.
- **Baltimore** of the AA averaged 7 errors a game (490 errors/73 games)



**First Year:** Pete Browning and IF **Bid McPhee** of AA; P **John Clarkson**, P Charlie Buffington, McPhee was last to play position without using a glove.

**Post season championship:** Both games ended in controversy.

10/6: **AA's Cincinnati Reds beat NL's Chicago White Stockings 4-0.**

Reds worked around the AA's ban of playing NL teams by releasing & re-signing its players.

10/7: **NL's Chicago beat AA's Cincinnati Reds 2-0.**

Rumored that AA League President Dennis McKnight threatened to punish the Reds if they continued to play.

# National League

## 1883

Standings	ERA	BA	FA
<b>Boston</b> 63-35			
Chicago 59-39			
Providence 58-40			
Cleveland 55-42	2.23		.909
Buffalo 52-45		.284	
<b>New York</b> 46-50			
Detroit 40-58			
<b>Philadelphia</b> 17-81			

### League:

- Civil War vet **Abraham Mills** (1883-84) replaced **Arthur Soden** as NL president.

RULE: Batter was no longer called out if foul ball was caught on a bounce.

- **National Agreement** was established between the NL, AA, and Northwest League. Agreement was a series of rules, regulations, and enforcement governing players' contracts, trades, transfers, drafts, and releases.  
**Outcome:** owners had total control. Agreement included **reserve clause** protection of 11 players per team and player contract disputes. Those leagues that did not comply were considered *outlaw leagues*.
- Two new entries: **NY Gothams** and **Philadelphia Quakers** (formerly Worcester).  
**Boston** Red Caps changed name again to **Beaneaters**.  
First time New York entered the NL.
- Chicago's **Lakefront Park** allowed a capacity of 10,000. Seats were raised so fans could watch the game. LF was 180', RF 196', and CF just 300' away. The following year, NL established minimum LF/RF distances to 210'. Ballpark included luxury boxes.  
Umpires ruled it a double if ball was hit over LF fence. Team hit 13 HRs and 277 doubles.  
Colts lead NL in doubles from 1879-83.
- Philadelphia rookie P **John Coleman** 12-48. His 48 losses were an NL record.
  - Coleman pitched total of 772 innings in 1883.
  - As a team, Quakers committed 639 errors (6+/game). Season included 14G losing streak.
  - Philadelphia went 0-14 vs. Boston and were 2-12 vs. Cleveland, Chicago, and New York.

5/22: **Chicago** beat Boston 4-3. OF Billy Sunday struck out 4 times in 1<sup>st</sup> ML game – ML record since tied.

6/2: **NY** beat Chicago 22-7. Chicago Colts committed 20 errors to NY's 10.

6/20: **Boston** beat Philadelphia 29-4.

7/3: **Chicago** beat Buffalo 31-7. Nine CWS players scored 3+ runs.

8/10: **Chicago** beat **Toledo Blue Stockings** of Northwestern League 7-6 in exhibition game. Chicago manager Cap Anson would not allow club to take field since the Toledo squad included **Moses "Fleet" Walker**, a black player. Walker played anyway – subbing for Toledo catcher late in game. Anson was a major influence barring blacks from professional baseball. Similar incident re-occurred three years later.

8/21: **Providence** beat Philadelphia 28-0.

9/6: **Chicago** beat Detroit 26-6. Club scored ML record 18 runs and collected 18 straight hits in 7<sup>th</sup> inning.

- NL followed AA practice of paying umpires and offering per diem expenses.
- Chicago lost 4 games in crucial September series with Boston.
- American Association: **Charles Comiskey** took over the St. Louis Browns.

**First Year:** Tip O'Neill

# National League

## 1884

<b>Standings</b>		<b>ERA</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>FA</b>
Providence	84-28	1.61		
Boston	73-38			.922
Buffalo	64-47			
Chicago	62-50		.281	
New York	62-50			
Philadelphia	39-73			
Cleveland	35-77			
Detroit	28-82			

### League:

RULE: **Six balls** was a walk (reduced from 8). League tinkered with the walk two years later.

RULE: Pitchers were now allowed to throw overhand.

RULE: Foul ball caught on the fly was an out.

- Responding to head-hunting pitchers like **Tony “Apollo of the Box” Mullane**, AA awarded the batter 1<sup>st</sup> base after being hit by pitch.  
The NL hesitated 2 years prior to adopting this rule – felt it reduced the game.
- NL owners instituted a **salary cap** of \$2,000. Clubs graded players from A to D. Each grade carried a specific pay level.
- Teams no longer had to share a single bench – separate ones were provided for each team.
- First year **John Hillerich** began manufacturing baseball bats. First bats were made of white ash.
- **Providence Grays Hoss Radbourne** won the pitcher’s Triple Crown: 59-12, 679 IP and 441 strikeouts.  
Edward Achorn’s 2010 book, **59 in ’84** focused on Providence’s success and Radbourne’s record-setting season.  
Radbourne won 18 straight games during the season.

Grays coach **Frank Bancroft** was a Civil War veteran.

Club went 15-1 vs. Detroit.

**Providence** folded after the 1885 season. Club was unable to draw enough fan support.

5/30: **Chicago** beat Detroit 12-2 in G2 of DH.

Colts’ Ned Williamson became 1<sup>st</sup> NL player to hit 3 HRs in a game. All 3 came off Hoss Radbourne.

6/21: **Chicago** beat Boston 11-7.

From the 2<sup>nd</sup> inning on, Boston could only field 8 players. Umpire would not allow a replacement.

**Union Association** – a comparatively weak league vs. NL and other minor leagues. Union League opposed the reserve clause.

Chicago Union club featured pitcher **1-Arm Daily**, whose left hand was amputated at the wrist.

Club played on city’s south side.

- **Cleveland** dropped out after the 1884 season.
- **Detroit** lost 11 in a row.
- **C Deacon White** introduced the **chest protector**.
- **Philadelphia** 3B Joe Mulvey committed 6 errors in 1 game.
- **Brooklyn** club of AA was first called *the Atlantics*. Club joined the NL in 1890.

**First Year:** C Deacon McGuire, P Bob Caruthers

# National League

## 1885

Standings		ERA	BA	FA
Chicago	87-25			
New York	85-27	1.72	.269	.929
Philadelphia	56-54			
Providence	53-57			
Boston	46-66			
Detroit	41-67			
Buffalo	38-74			
<b>St. Louis</b>	36-72			

### League:

- Civil War veteran **Nicholas Young** replaced Abraham Mills as NL President (1885-1902).
- Until 1893, one side of the bat could be flat.
- **Salary cap** and grading players (see 1884) led Monty Ward to form **Union of Professional Base Ball Players**. Union went unrecognized by NL and AA. Ward and union sought salaries expressly stated on contracts. NL owners had made a pact with AA counterparts to limit player contracts: \$2K maximum to \$1K minimum.
- **St. Louis Maroons** franchise of the Union Association joined NL and came in last.
- Cincinnati P **Tony Mullane** was suspended 1 year for signing on with too many teams.
- **Chicago** began play at **West Side Park** (Congress & Throop) until 1891. New park cost \$30K. LF and RF were 216' from home. CWS out-scored their opponents 834-470. Chicago won 18 in a row, went 16-0 vs. Buffalo team and 15-1 vs. Detroit. John Clarkson's 53 wins in 1885 placed him 2<sup>nd</sup> all-time to Providence's Hoss Radbourne (60, 1884).

5/27: NY Giants beat Buffalo 24-0.

- **NY Giants** (formerly Gothams) included several members of the 1884 AA champion NY Mets. Giants P **Mickey Welch** won 17 straight games.
- **Buffalo** lost 16 in a row. **Providence** lost 13 straight games and folded at end of season.
- **Western League** formed (later the American League, 1899) Teams were set up in Detroit, Sioux City (Iowa), Toledo, Kansas City, Indianapolis, Grand Rapids, and Minneapolis. As a minor league – the WL made themselves legally bound to National Agreement – upholding the rights and rules and interest of organized baseball.

**First Year:** OF **Tommy McCarthy**, OF Jim "Pony" Ryan, Sam Thompson, And Denny Lyons

- **AA's Brooklyn Atlantics** were re-named Grays. Club later became the Grooms, Bridegrooms, Superbas, Robins, and the **Dodgers** in 1911.

**First Year:** OF **Tommy McCarthy**, OF Jimmy Ryan, OF **Sam Thompson**, Denny Lyons

**World Championship Series** (aka "America's Championship Series"). Chicago White Stockings vs. St. Louis Browns of AA. Series was to be played in 7 cities: Chicago, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Brooklyn. Due to cold weather, games scheduled in Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Brooklyn were cancelled. Series ended in a 3-3-1 tie. Contests were marked by terrible fielding by both clubs – 102 errors total (59 by CWS). Series included violence on/off field and major disputes with umpires.

What was worse, games were played with little/no enthusiasm; players even showed up drunk. No player from either team was compensated for post-season tournament.

# National League

## 1886

<b>Standings</b>		<b>ERA</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>FA</b>
Chicago	90-34			
Detroit	87-36		.280	.928
New York	75-44			
Philadelphia	71-43	2.46		
Boston	56-61			
St. Louis	43-79			
<b>Kansas City</b>	30-91			
<b>Washington</b>	28-92			

### League:

RULE: **Seven balls** was a **walk** (up from 6).

RULE: Pitchers were no longer required to have both feet on ground prior to delivering the pitch.

- League began charting **stolen bases**.
- Season extended to 124 games

**Trend:** Owners limited salaries to \$2K maximum and charged players for use of uniforms and 50c/day traveling expenses.

- Two new entries: **Kansas City Cowboys** and **Washington Senators**. This was Kansas City's only year.
- **Chicago** manager Cap Anson was first to institute **spring training**. Club met and practiced in Hot Springs, Arkansas. **Chicago** had winning streaks of 14 and 10.
- **Ladies Day** began in Cincinnati – female fans came out to see P Tony Mullane. Cincinnati club included SS Frank Fennelly (117 errors).
- Northwest League included **William Hoy** (aka Dummy, for his inability to hear). Hoy required umpires to visually indicate with hands/arms if player was safe or out. Hoy joined the NL in 1888.
- **Detroit** won 15 games in a row. Wolverines went 17-1-1 vs. Washington
- **St. Louis** dropped out after the season.
- First issue of *The Sporting News* was published in March.
- **Louisville** P Guy Hecker won 25 games plus won batting title at .341
- AA began using the **coach's box** on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base lines. Move prevented/limited coaches from interfering with on-field play.

5/28: **Chicago** beat Washington 20-0 (McCormick). Club's most 1-sided shutout.

**First Year:** Pre-Negro League star IF **Frank Grant**

**Championship Series:** Chicago White Stockings vs. St. Louis Browns.

Total of 8,000 saw the 3-game series.

Despite leading the series 2-games to 1 lead, CWS lost series 4 games to 2 in winner-take-all.

Later reported that some players planned to tank the contests.

Colt's GM Al Spalding angrily refused to pay players' train fare back to Chicago.

# National League

## 1887

<b>Standings</b>		<b>ERA</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>FA</b>
Detroit	79-45		.299	.925
Philadelphia	75-48			
Chicago	71-50	3.46		
New York	68-55			
Boston	61-60			
<b>Pittsburgh</b>	55-69			
Washington	46-76			
<b>Indianapolis</b>	37-89			

### League:

RULE: **Walk** now required 5 balls (down from 7); amended again in 1889.

For 1 year only, 4 strikes = **strikeout**. Strike zone further defined: top of shoulder to bottom of knee.

RULE: For 1 year, **a walk was tabulated as a hit**. Twenty players hit .400. After a retroactive adjustment – none.

RULE: Batters were no longer permitted to call out for desired pitch.

RULE: (Perhaps following the AA) Batter was allowed 1<sup>st</sup> base after he was hit by a pitch.

- **Stolen bases** were counted (see 1886). Taking an extra base on a play was also counted as a stolen base.
- Player/inventor **Robert Keating** made a home plate of rubber with a black border.  
The wood (or stone) version caused too many injuries.
- Borrowing from the AA: a **coach's box** was added to keep 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> base coaches from interfering with on-field play.
- **Detroit** obtained Buffalo Four: 3B Deacon White, 1B Dan Brouthers, SS Jack Rowe, and OF Hardy Richardson.  
Despite winning pennant in 1887, Detroit suffered poor attendance in small-market Detroit. Team folded in 1889.
- **Philadelphia** made '87 race close with 16 game winning streak at end of season.  
Phillies took 17 of 18 games vs. Indianapolis.  
Club moved to Huntington Grounds
- **Indianapolis Hoosiers** re-entered the NL; club remained through 1889 season.
- Another new member, **Pittsburgh Alleghenies** later became the **Pittsburgh Pirates**.
- **C Charles "Chief" Zimmer** another catcher who moved behind the plate. Catchers normally stood 10-20' away.

6/11: NY beat Washington 26-2.

6/15: NY beat Philadelphia 29-1

6/28: Philadelphia beat Indianapolis 24-0

- Approximately 20 blacks played professional baseball throughout the country.  
7/14: International League owners adopted **NL's unwritten code** to not tender any contracts to blacks.  
**Winter of 1887-88** – clause in NL constitution limited number of black players per team.

- American Association: now **4 strikes for a strikeout**.

Some AA stars recorded gaudy stats:

Baltimore Orioles' **Matt Kilroy** – in only in his 2<sup>nd</sup> season, pitched 589 innings and won 46 games.

St. Louis Browns' **Tip O'Neill** won the batter's Triple Crown: 225 hits, 52 doubles, and .435 BA (corrected from .492).

Browns won 15 games in a row during the season and took 18 of 19 games vs. Cleveland.

**Fred Chapman**, the youngest player (at 14) to ever play, pitched into 5<sup>th</sup> inning with 6-4 lead. Game ended in a tie.

**First Year:** P Gus Weyhing, IF Mike Tiernan

**Championship Series:** Detroit defeated St. Louis in a best of 15 series 8 games to 3.

Browns owner refused to pay his players after winning the 6-game 1886 Championship Series vs. Chicago, nor did he pay them for any of the 11G 1887 Championship series vs. Detroit.

# National League

## 1888

<b>Standings</b>		<b>ERA</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>FA</b>
New York	84-47	1.96		
Chicago	77-58			
Philadelphia	69-61			
Boston	70-64			
Detroit	68-63		.263	
Pittsburgh	66-68			.927
Indianapolis	50-85			
Washington	48-86			

### League:

RULE: Three strikes were now a **strikeout** (down from 4).

RULE: **Walks** were no longer computed as hits, nor were they counted as an official at bat.

RULE: Batter was awarded a hit if his batted ball hit a runner.

RULE: **Ground rule double** for balls bouncing over fences less than 210' from home plate (refined in 1892).

RULE: Pitchers were charged with an error for any walks, hit batters, or wild pitches (eliminated the next year).

RULE: Batters were credited a hit if hit by a pitch.

- Walks by pitcher was now a statistic

5/9: **NY Giants** beat Indianapolis Hoosiers 18-4. Giants' Roger Conner hit 3 HRs.

8/14: **Chicago** beat NY Giants 4-2. CWS ended P Tim Keefe's 19 game winning streak.

10/5: Pittsburgh's P **Pud Galvin** won his 300<sup>th</sup> career game.

- Boston's Grand Pavilion Park opened.
- Detroit suffered a 16-game losing streak. Club folded after season.
- Ernest Thayer penned his famous poem "*Casey at the Bat.*"
- NY Giants P **Tim Keefe** won the pitcher's triple crown. Season included 19-game winning streak.
- P **John Clarkson** was traded from Chicago to Boston for \$10K.  
From 1889-93, Clarkson went 166-92 (33-18 average). His best season was 1889, going 49-19.
- Between 1888-89, Chicago GM **Al Spalding** took manager Cap Anson, a host of White Stockings players, and an "All American" squad that included Ned Hanlon and Monty Ward for a **World Tour**.

Starting in St. Paul, MN, the players then traveled west to Los Angeles, California. Overseas visits included Hawaii (70 years before statehood), New Zealand, Australia, Sri Lanka (then known as Ceylon), Egypt – where some sat atop the sacred Sphinx. The players then journeyed to continental Europe, visiting Naples, Paris, and various sites in the UK.

White Sox owner Charles Comiskey and NYG John McGraw took their players on two similar tours in the 1900s.

**First Year:** 1B **Jake Beckley**, OF **Ed Delahanty**, **Hugh Duffy**, OF William Ellsworth "Dummy" Hoy, **Billy Hamilton**, and P **John Tener**.

- Tener later served as a US Congressman, Governor of Pennsylvania, and President of NL in 1913.
- Delahanty's .346 career BA remains 4<sup>th</sup> highest in ML

# National League

## 1889

<b>Standings</b>	<b>ERA</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>FA</b>
New York 83-43		.282	
Boston 83-45	3.36		
Chicago 67-65			
Philadelphia 63-64			
Pittsburgh 61-71			
Cleveland 61-72			.936
Indianapolis 59-75			
Washington 41-83			

### League:

RULE: To speed up the game, 4 balls was a **walk**.

RULE: On a limited basis, teams could **substitute players**.

Previously, players could be removed if injured or was switched to a different position.

RULE: Pitchers were not charged with an error for walks, hit batters, wild pitches, and balks.

- **Strikeouts** and **HBP** were now a statistic
- While **Monty Ward** was in Europe on a World Tour, Indianapolis owner **John Brush** sneaked in a **player classification** rule: players were graded from A to E and pay scales were fixed (\$2,500 - \$1,500). Ward, also a lawyer, contested the NL's reserve clause.

Player-owner confrontations led to the formation of the **Brotherhood of Professional Base Ball Players** (aka **Players League**). League lasted 1 year.

League was run like a cooperative, including profit sharing.

Several players fled to **Players League** following 1889 season.

Players League salaries were higher than those set by the NL.

- Washington and Indianapolis dropped out after the season.
- Former CWS **John Clarkson** won the pitcher's triple crown (league-leader in wins, ERA, and innings pitched). Clarkson won 49 games.
- AA's Brooklyn Bridegrooms set the 19<sup>th</sup> century mark for attendance (300K).
- AA's **Louisville Colonels** ended 27-111 (.196) including 26 game losing streak and 4 coaches. Colonels were 1-19 vs. Brooklyn, 2-18 vs. Cincinnati and 2-18-1 vs. St. Louis.

**First Year:** P **Amos Rusie**, P "Wild" Bill Hutchison



# National League

## 1890

Standings		ERA	BA	FA
<b>Brooklyn</b>	86- 53			.940
Chicago	84- 53			
<b>Philadelphia</b>	78- 54		.269	
<b>Cincinnati</b>	77- 55	2.79		
Boston	76- 57			
New York	63- 68			
Cleveland	44- 88			
<b>Pittsburgh</b>	23-113			

### League:

RULE: Defacing the ball was outlawed

RULE: Batter hitting a sacrifice fly was not charged with an at bat.

- **Three separate leagues** were all playing simultaneously: NL, AA, and the upstart **Players League**. Number would be reduced to a **single league** by 1892.
    - **Players League's** lone year: Players revolted when NL instituted salary scale (\$2,500 - \$1,500)
    - **American Association** overextended itself by expanding to 12 teams. AA also folded after the 1890 season.
  - **Pittsburgh Alleghenies** was now known as the **Innocents**; the **Philadelphia Quakers** changed name to the **Phillies**.
  - **NL added 2 solid former AA teams** – **Brooklyn** and **Cincinnati**. Cincinnati Red Stockings were re-named **Reds**. Brooklyn's 1<sup>st</sup> year in NL led to a pennant! Players were paid well – less inducement to flee to Players League.
  - Vendors at NY Giants Polo Grounds introduced a food that is now a fan staple: **the hot dog**. Polo Grounds featured short fences to left (257) and right (279). NYG P **Amos Rusie** set dubious ML record for walks: 289.
- 5/30: Chicago's **Bill Hutchison** pitched and won both ends of DH vs. Brooklyn (6-4 & 11-7). Hutchison was 1<sup>st</sup> of 2 CWS to pitch 2 complete game victories in 1 day (2<sup>nd</sup>: 1908)
- 6/4: **Tim Keefe** won his 300<sup>th</sup> game (342-225)
- 7/28: **Mickey Welch** won his 300<sup>th</sup> game (307-210)
- Chicago's **Bill Hutchison** was last ML pitcher to pitch 600+ innings (1892). From 1890-92, Hutchison pitched in 212 games
  - **Chicago** won 11 in a row.
  - Sacrifice bunt more in use.
  - **Catcher's mitt** first in use by Cincinnati catcher.
  - Chicago Colt's **Al Spalding** had league help fund NY Giants owner (\$62,500-\$80,000) to stay afloat.
  - **John T. Brush** principal owner of Cincinnati Reds – later owned NYG.
  - AA's Louisville team went from last (1899) to 1<sup>st</sup> in 1890.

**Streaks:** **Philadelphia** won 16 games in a row.

**Pittsburgh** suffered losing streaks of 14, 16 and 23 games. Team also lost 41 straight games on the road.

- Club committed 607 errors; NYG was 7<sup>th</sup> with 449.
- Innocents went 1-27 in August, were 2-18 vs. Brooklyn
- Pittsburgh's .169 winning percentage is worst in ML.

**First Year:** P **Denton "Cy" Young**, SS **George Davis**, P **Kid Nichols**, and OF **Jesse Burkett**

Young: career spanned through 1911, record of 511-316; record vs. Chicago: 32-12.

**Last Year:** C **Deacon White**

# National League

## 1891

<b>Standings</b>		<b>ERA</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>FA</b>
Boston	87-51	2.77		.938
Chicago	82-53			
New York	71-61		.263	
Philadelphia	68-69			
Cleveland	65-74			
Brooklyn	61-76			
Cincinnati	56-81			
<b>Pittsburgh</b>	55-80			

### League:

RULE: Once a player was substituted, he could not re-enter the game.

**Players League** folded. Members could return to NL or AA without reprisal from either league.

Outcome: While NL or AA clubs pared down their rosters, players were offered pay cuts – some as much as 40%.

**American Association's** withdrawal from National Agreement (1883) led to its eventual collapse at seasons end.

- Baseball in the 1890s had its problems: **Syndication**, with some owners owning more than 1 club (see 1892).  
**Rowdyism** was at its worst: opponents tripping each other, on-field fighting, loud profanity, rampant cheating, and umpire baiting.  
Author Bill James: NL went almost entirely backward during this decade. No clear champion.
- **Pittsburgh Innocents** were renamed the **Pirates** – after the team “pirated” Philadelphia Phillies’ 2B Louis Bierbauer, who was expected to return to Philadelphia after Players League folded.

6/2: **Cincinnati** beat Boston 10-8. Red’s **Hoss Radbourne** won his 300<sup>th</sup> career game (career 309-195).

6/13: **NY Giants** beat Chicago 8-7 before a record crowd at Polo Grounds (22,289).  
Giants Roger Connor and Jim O’Rourke hit back-to-back inside the park HRs.

8/25: **Chicago** beat Brooklyn 28-5.  
Chicago P Pat Luby homered twice. Club’s 54 total bases included 4 homers, 5 triples, and 4 doubles.

- **Boston** went 23-10 in September and won 18 games in a row from September 16<sup>th</sup> - October 2.  
1890s: Boston P Kid Nichols won 30+ games 7 times.
- **NY Giants P Amos Rusie** struck out 337 batters while walking 262. Rusie walked 267 in 1892.
- **Washington** SS Joe Sullivan committed 103 errors  
Nationals went 2-18 vs. Boston and 2-17-1 vs. St. Louis
- Following the 1891 season: NL added 4 teams from the defunct American Association: St. Louis, Washington, Baltimore, and a revived Louisville.  
All 4 teams ended up finishing in bottom of the NL.
- Both P Hoss Radbourne and Pud Galvin introduced the **3-fingered glove**.

**First Year:** OF **Joe Kelly**, SS Bill Dahlen, umpire Bob Emslie

# National League

## 1892

<b>Standings</b>	<b>RA</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>FA</b>
Boston 102- 48			
Cleveland 93- 56	2.42		
Brooklyn 95- 59			.940
Philadelphia 87- 66		.262	
Cincinnati 82- 68		.262	
Pittsburgh 80- 73			
Chicago 70- 76			
New York 71- 80			
<b>Louisville</b> 63- 89			
<b>Washington</b> 58- 93			
<b>St. Louis</b> 56- 94			
<b>Baltimore</b> 46-101			

### League:

RULE: Game was awarded to visiting team if any fan entered field to challenge umpire.

RULE: First year of the Rule V Draft. ML clubs – in no particular order, could draft a minor league player (revised in 1931).

RULE: If OF fence was less than 235' from home, fly balls hit over the fence were ruled ground-rule doubles.

**Split season:** Each team was scheduled to play 154 games (later reduced to 140 through 1903).

1<sup>st</sup> part of season ended on 7/15 and the second ended in mid-October.

Only 3 teams out of 12 were in the race. Despite falling in last place, Baltimore was 2 years away from a dynasty.

- Rosters were cut from 15 to 13.
- **American Association folded.** NL was now a 12-team monopoly having absorbed four AA teams including the Baltimore Orioles, St. Louis Browns, Washington Statesmen/Senators/Nationals, and Louisville Colonels and bought off others for \$130K.

In a span of two years, 3 competing leagues (NL, AA, and PL) totaling 24 teams was reduced to 1 league and 12 teams.  
**St. Louis** club was called the **Perfectos** and began play in Robison Field. Club was re-named the Cardinals in 1899.

- **Beginning of syndicate ownership:** One group owned the Cleveland-St. Louis franchises, another group held the rights to the Baltimore-Brooklyn franchises, and a third owned the Louisville & Pittsburgh teams.
- Blue Laws were still in effect – no games on Sundays in Philadelphia, Boston, and NY. Admission was reduced to 25c.

6/6: **Benjamin Harrison** became 1<sup>st</sup> sitting US president to attend a ML game. Cincinnati beat Washington 7-4.

6/10: **Baltimore** beat St. Louis 25-4. **Wilbert Robinson** went 7-7, and drove in 11 runs (ML record until 1924)

9/20: Boston beat Brooklyn 13-2. **John Clarkson** won his 300<sup>th</sup> career game (career 328-178).

10/15: Cincinnati P **Bumpus Jones** tossed no-hitter in his 1<sup>st</sup> ML game, beating Pittsburgh 7-1.

- **Boston Beaneaters'** Tommy McCarthy was perhaps the first to use signals to batters and runners. Boston took all 13 games from Baltimore.
- **Charles Comiskey** began player-manager of Cincinnati Reds.
- **National Agreement** – Major leagues could draft minor league players for pre-set amount. Higher-tier minor league teams could draft players from lower tiers also for pre-set amount.
- **Philadelphia** won 16 straight games.

- **Washington** began canceling home games and rescheduled them as road games to get bigger crowds.
- **Cleveland** went 13-1 vs. Louisville.

**First Year:** OF **Willie Keeler**, SS **Hughie Jennings**.

**Jennings** was drilled by an Amos Rusie fastball. Event possibly led to increasing distance from mound to plate.

# National League

## 1893

<b>Standings</b>		<b>ERA</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>FA</b>
Boston	86-43			
Pittsburgh	81-48			
Cleveland	73-55			
Philadelphia	72-57		.301	.944
New York	68-64			
Brooklyn	65-63			
Cincinnati	65-63			
Baltimore	60-70			
Chicago	56-71			
St. Louis	57-75	4.07		
Louisville	50-75			
Washington	40-89			

### League:

- The nation was mired in a Depression – considered one of the worst in US history, lasted until 1897.

RULE: To improve batting averages, the **distance from mound to home increased** from 50' to 60' 6".

The additional 6" was actually a misprint (the 6 was actually a 0 that was never corrected).

**Elevated mound** included a 4"x12" **slab** and eliminated the pitcher's box.

The pitcher was now required to place his rear foot against the pitching rubber.

RULE: Batter was not charged with an at-bat if he sacrificed the runner to the next base.

- **Sacrifice hits** became a new statistic.
- All **baseball bats** were to be round.
- Pitchers employed the **changeup** with greater results.
- **Fundamentals on defense:** outfielders began to relay throws to infielders.

- One of Boston's successes was utilizing the hit-and-run.

8/1: Pittsburgh beat St. Louis 25-2.

- Pittsburgh P **Frank Killen's** 36 wins was most for lefty (1893-present).
- NY Giants' **George Davis** hit safely in 33 straight games.
- NY Giants' **Amos Rusie** walked ML record 218 batters. From 1893-94, Rusie started 102 games, completing 95 (926 IP)
- After Boston won the championship, Pittsburgh fans threw rocks at the Beaneaters while the players were returning in a horse-drawn wagon.
- November: **Western League** (previously Northwestern League) formed.  
Teams were set up in Detroit, Sioux City (Iowa), Toledo, Kansas City, Indianapolis, Grand Rapids, and Minneapolis.

The Western League was legally bound to the **National Agreement** – upholding the rights and rules and interests of organized baseball

- The United States began 4-year economic depression.

**Last Year:** Harry Stovey

**First Year:** P Clark Griffith, OF Bill Lange

# National League

## 1894

Standings	ERA	BA	FA
Baltimore 89-39			.944
New York 88-44	3.81		
Boston 83-49			
Philadelphia 71-57		.350	
Brooklyn 70-61			
Cleveland 68-61			
Pittsburgh 65-65			
Chicago 57-75			
St. Louis 56-76			
Cincinnati 55-75			
Washington 45-87			
Louisville 36-94			

### League:

RULE: Bunts batted foul were called a strike.

- Players were still being arrested for playing baseball on Sundays.
- **NL as league hit .309.** NL's BA in 1893 was .245.  
Baltimore Orioles club BA was an incredible .343 but placed 2<sup>nd</sup> to the Phillies' .349!  
Three Philadelphia Phillies outfielders hit above .400.
- Teams combined to score almost 15 runs a game (14.7).  
League ERA was 5.32. Ten of 12 teams had ERAs above 5.00.  
NL clubs averaged 259 stolen bases.
- **A two-team race for the pennant.** Baltimore began 34-13 and won 18 games in a row from August 24-September 16.

### Baltimore lore:

- Club was 1<sup>st</sup> in 3Bs (150) and 2<sup>nd</sup> in BA (.343; 7 of the Orioles starters batted .335+).  
Orioles placed 1<sup>st</sup> in fielding and 3<sup>rd</sup> in ERA

### Boston lore:

- Beaneaters led NL in runs (1220; 5 players scored 130+) and HRs (103). Club scored 20+ runs 7 times.  
Boston placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in BA (.331) behind Philadelphia (.350) and Baltimore (.343).  
OF **Hugh Duffy** batted .440. Duffy totaled 237 hits, 145 RBIs, 372 Total Bases, .690 Slugging average, and 51 doubles.  
Duffy's BA was 77 points higher than any other season he played.

### Philadelphia lore:

- Phillies led league in BA (.350). Three players batted .400+ (Sam Thompson .415, Ed Delahanty .403, Billy Hamilton .403).  
Club scored 15+ runs 26 times and allowed 15+ runs 25 times.  
Despite OF **Billy Hamilton's** 36 game hitting streak and 198 runs scored, Philadelphia finished 4<sup>th</sup>.  
Hamilton hit .466 during his streak (76-163). From 1894-95, Hamilton scored 364 runs.
- **Connie Mack** began long coaching career by managing Pittsburgh Pirates
- From 1894-95, **St Louis P Ted Breitenstein** completed 93 of 101 games
- From 1894-98, **Baltimore's** Hughie Jennings was hit by a pitch 202 times (ML record 51 times in 1898).
- **Rowdyism** rampant: rules were broken, players did not hesitate to harass, spike/injure opponents or umpires.  
League did not enforce their rules.

**Streaks:** Louisville suffered losing streaks of 18 and 20 games. Colonels went 0-12-1 vs. NY. **Washington** lost 17 in a row.

- 6/18: **Baltimore** lost to Boston 24-7. Oriole's P **Tony Mullane** allowed 16 runs in the 1<sup>st</sup> inning.  
Mullane retired at end of season.
- 8/5: **Chicago** beat Cincinnati 8-1 in 6 innings (Griffith). Game stopped when fire broke out in the outfield stands.  
George Decker, Jimmy Ryan and Walt Wilmot used bats to part barbed-wire fence, saving 1,600 fans.  
Debatable whether fire was set deliberately – perhaps by a cigar stub.  
Approx. 500 patrons were injured attempting to get through. Area was rebuilt when club went on the road.
- 8/6: **Chicago** beat Cincinnati 12-9 (Stratton). SS Bill Dahlen's 2 hits extended his streak to 42 games.  
Area that was burned the day before was fenced off. Fans sat on the left side of the field.
- 8/7: **Chicago** beat Cincinnati 13-11 in 10 innings (Hutchison).  
Dahlen went hitless in 6 at bats, thus ending his 42G hitting streak.
- 8/17: **Louisville** lost to Philadelphia 29-4. Colonels P **John Wadsworth** allowed 28 hits in the game.
- 8/26: Unbeknownst to park officials, Chicago C **Billy "Pops" Schriver** performed what was then somewhat of a typical feat of era: catching a baseball dropped 555' from atop the Washington Monument.  
P **Clark Griffith** was his partner.

#### **NL Parks that burned:**

1. Boston's South End Grounds right field bleachers caught fire –was started by arsonist.
2. Philadelphia's Baseball Grounds
3. Baltimore: Union Park also suffered fire damage.

- **Western League** re-formed – later renamed the **American League** in 1899.

**First Year:** SS **Bobby Wallace** and OF **Fred Clarke**

**Temple Cup:** While the US was in midst of 4-year Depression, NL attempted to boost attendance by scheduling a championship series between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place teams. The team that won the best-of five playoff games was awarded the **Temple Cup**.

Winners were to receive 65% (later amended to 50/50).

First Temple Cup: NY Giants beat the Baltimore Orioles. Despite NL's intentions, overall play was half-hearted.

# National League

## 1895

<b>Standings</b>		<b>ERA</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>FA</b>
Baltimore	87-43	3.81		.946
Cleveland	84-46			
Philadelphia	78-53		.330	
Chicago	72-58			
Brooklyn	71-60			
Boston	71-60			
Pittsburgh	71-61			
Cincinnati	66-64			
New York	66-65			
Washington	43-85			
St. Louis	39-92			
Louisville	35-96			

### League:

RULE: **Infield Fly Rule** improved: batter is out per discretion of umpire upon batter's popup.

Runners were not required to advance, and the ball did not have to be caught – thwarting players that were adept at trapping the ball; modified in 1900.

RULE: **Foul tip** is ruled a strike.

RULE: Should fans prove to be too unruly, requiring a 15-minute delay of game, the umpire could call forfeit. The opposing team would win by the score of 9-0.

- **Size of pitching rubber:** 6" x 24"
  - **Philadelphia's Baker Bowl** opened. RF 280' from home. The 1895 Phillies scored 1,068 runs in 133 games.
  - **Andrew Freeman** became new owner of NY Giants.  
Freeman joined others in purchasing a financial interest in more than 1 team.  
**NL's syndicate now included** Freeman, Boston's **Arthur Soden** and Cincinnati's **John Brush**.
  - **NY Giants** placed 9<sup>th</sup>, but were still above .500  
Giants' P **Amos Rusie**'s last season in ML.  
Owner Andrew Freeman withheld \$200 from Rusie for unspecified violations. With neither side willing to budge, and Rusie considered one of NL's marquee players, other owners chipped in and paid Rusie \$3,000.
  - **Louisville's** Fred Clarke hit safely in 35 straight games (.384; 58-151).  
Colonels suffered 15G losing streak.
  - **St. Louis** team suffering identity crisis? Team known as Browns, Maroons, Perfectos, and later Cardinals.
  - **Baltimore Orioles** won 14 games in a row.
- 6/23: **Chicago** beat Cleveland 13-4 (Griffith). Entire Colt team was arrested after the game for playing on a Sunday.  
Owner Hart posted \$100 bond per player. All charges were dropped the following January.  
The charges read "aiding and abetting noise on Sunday."

**First Year:** IF **Jimmy Collins**, 3B Bill Everitt

**Temple Cup:** Baltimore citizens threw rocks at Cleveland Spiders players while the latter rode horse-drawn wagon – perhaps in retaliation for similar incident 6 days earlier in Cleveland.



# National League

## 1896

<b>Standings</b>		<b>ERA</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>FA</b>
Baltimore	90-39		.328	
Cleveland	80-48	3.47		
Cincinnati	77-50			.951
Boston	74-57			
Chicago	71-57			
Pittsburgh	66-63			
New York	64-67			
Philadelphia	62-68			
Brooklyn	58-73			
Washington	58-73			
St. Louis	40-90			
Louisville	38-93			

### **League:**

RULE: Home team was required to supply 12 game balls.

RULE: A \$25 fine was assessed for using vulgar language.

- NYG P **Amos Rusie** sat out season in feud with owner Andrew Freeman.
- Umpire had 8 members of Cleveland Spiders arrested during a game in June.
- **Cincinnati** 2B Bid McPhee was the last player to go without a fielder's glove.
- Baltimore Orioles IF **Hughie Jennings** drove in the most runs (121 RBIs) without having hit a HR.
- **St. Louis** suffered losing streaks of 14, 10, 8, 7, and 6 (3 times), and lost all 12 of their games to Cincinnati.
- **Baltimore** went 12-0 vs. Philadelphia.

6/19: **Chicago** beat Cleveland 8-3 (Griffith).

Spiders coach Patsy Tebeau refused to leave field after ejection, leading to a fight with game's only umpire, Tom Lynch. One player from each team served as umpire the rest of the game.

7/13: **Philadelphia** lost to Chicago 9-8 despite Ed Delahanty's 4 homers, a single & 7 RBIs.

7/28: **St. Louis** beat Louisville 20-8. Lowly Browns swept 3G series.

9/3: G1: **Boston** beat St. Louis 28-7. Beaneaters swept 5G series, out-scoring the Browns 79-24.

**First Year:** Fielder Jones, IF **Nap Lajoie**

**Last Year:** P Bill Hutchison

# National League

## 1897

<b>Standings</b>		<b>ERA</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>FA</b>
Boston	93- 39			.951
Baltimore	90- 40		.325	.951
New York	83- 48	3.45		
Cincinnati	76- 56			
Cleveland	69- 62			
Brooklyn	61- 71			
Washington	61- 71			
Pittsburgh	60- 71			
Chicago	59- 73			
Philadelphia	55- 77			
Louisville	52- 78			
St. Louis	29-102			

### League:

RULE: **No error** was charged if a double play was not completed.

RULE: Player or team was fined \$5 for discoloring the baseball.

- Blue Laws still in effect elsewhere: May 16<sup>th</sup>: Cleveland police arrested fans and player at League Park during 1<sup>st</sup> inning.

5/11: C Duke Farrell threw out 8 Oriole base stealers.

6/29: **Chicago** beat Louisville 36-7. Chicago's run total remains ML record.

Hitting stars: IF **Barry McCormick**: 6-8/3B & HR and P **Nixey Callahan**: 5-7/2 2B

- McCormick and Jimmy Ryan each scored 5 runs; four others scored 4/each; 10 players scored at least twice.
- CWS collected 32 hits and scored in every inning.
- Club scored 5 runs in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 7 runs twice (3<sup>rd</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> innings), and 8 more in the 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Louisville's 9 errors aided the cause.

7/16: **Chicago** beat Baltimore 6-3. **Cap Anson** (single) became **first MLB player collect his 3,000<sup>th</sup> hit**.

- After 22 years, **Chicago Cubs** released manager **Cap Anson** at the end of the season.
- **Willie Keeler** batted .432 for season, but "only" .421 during his historic 44G hitting streak (85-202).  
Keeler's ML record lasted until 1941 (Joe DiMaggio's 56 for NYY); Pete Rose tied Keeler's NL record in 1978.
- Tough season for 2 **St. Louis pitchers**: Red Donahue (post-1893 ML record 35 losses) and Bill Hart (27 losses).  
Club endured an 18-game losing streak and lost all 12 of their games vs. New York.
- **Boston** went 21-2 in June – making it a 2-team race in late summer/fall. 57,000 saw 3-game set in late September.  
Season included 17-game winning streak. (5/31-6/21).
- **Louisville** rookie Honus Wagner began as an outfielder.
- **Washington's** Jake Gettman collected 10 straight hits.

**Last Year:** Roger Connor. Connor's 123<sup>rd</sup> career HR broke Harry Stovey's ML record.  
Connor's 139 career HRs was later broken by Babe Ruth.

**First Year:** **Honus Wagner, P Rube Waddell**, P Jack Powell, C **Roger Bresnahan**, future Cub OF Jimmy Sheppard, OF Mike "Turkey" Donlin, and umpire **Hank O'Day**.  
Wagner's career numbers: 3,420 hits, 643 doubles, 252 triples, and .328 BA. Wagner played through 1917.

# National League

## 1898

<b>Standings</b>		<b>ERA</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>FA</b>
Boston	102- 47			.951
Baltimore	96- 53		.302	.951
Cincinnati	92- 60			
<b>Chicago</b>	85- 65	2.83		
Cleveland	81- 68			
Philadelphia	78- 71			
New York	77- 73			
Pittsburgh	72- 76			
Louisville	70- 81			
Brooklyn	54- 91			
Washington	51-101			
St. Louis	39-111			

### League:

- **Spanish-American War** began in April and ended in December.

RULE: Player was no longer credited with a stolen base if he went from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> on a single.

RULE: Players were no longer allowed to sit in the stands.

RULE: Balk rule began (refined in 1899).

- **Brush Resolution** attempted to clean the game by instituting fines for fighting and swearing. Resolution failed.
- NL used **2-man umpire crews** for 2 years.
- NL returned to the **154-game** schedule. Washington played the most games (152); Brooklyn the fewest (145).

4/16: A lit cigar caused fire and destruction of grandstand and LF bleachers at St. Louis' **Sportsman's Park**.  
At least 100 were injured. Park was replaced by Robison Field. Team was soon re-named the Cardinals.

- With long-time Chicago manager **Cap Anson** gone, squad was known as **Orphans** and **Rainmakers**.

6/29: **Chicago beat NY Giants 12-4** (Callahan).  
Former CWS manager (1879-97) **Cap Anson returned** to Chicago as Giants' manager.  
Over 12,000 attended to honor him.

- Umpire **Tom Connolly's** first year. (1898-1931; Hall of Fame 1953).
- Cincinnati's **Elmer Smith** hit safely in 30 straight games (.427; 53-124)
- **Washington** lost 14 in a row.
- St. Louis Cardinals P "**Brewery Jack**" **Taylor**: 15-29. Taylor had better years with the Phillies (1894-96: 69-47).
- Thanks to syndication, **Baltimore** lost several top players to **Brooklyn**, including Willie Keeler.  
Club was managed by John McGraw.

**First Year:** OF **Elmer Flick**, P **Vic Willis**, P Sam Leever, OF **Sam Crawford**, umpire **Tommy Connolly**,  
and P Jack "Brakeman" Taylor.  
Taylor was known for finishing what he started. Rookie season: 5-0, 5 starts, 5 complete games.

# National League

## 1899

<b>Standings</b>		<b>ERA</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>FA</b>
<b>Brooklyn</b>	101- 47	3.25		
Boston	95- 57			.952
Philadelphia	94- 58		.301	
Baltimore	86- 62			
<b>St. Louis</b>	84- 67			
Cincinnati	83- 67			
Pittsburgh	76- 73			
Chicago	75- 73			
Louisville	75- 77			
New York	60- 90			
Washington	54- 98			
Cleveland	20-134			

### League:

RULE: The **balk rule** refined – pitcher was prohibited from faking pick-off throw.

### League in trouble:

**Proposal** was made to pool all the players and receipts, then redistribute the players to specifically chosen teams before each new season.

**Salary cap** was imposed – no player could earn more than \$2,400, and strict disciplinary rules were enforced. Great disparity was evident between top 9 teams and bottom 3.

- **Pittsburgh's Jimmy Williams'** 219 hits were an ML-record (broken in 1927).  
For the season, Williams hit .355 with 27 triples
- Washington OF **Buck Freeman's** 25 HRs was most since 1884 (27; Chicago's Ned Williamson).
- **Philadelphia Phillies** were guilty of using a buzzer buried beneath the 3B coach's box.  
Phillies' Ed Delahanty hit safely in 31 straight games (.410 during streak)
- **Brooklyn Grooms** were re-named **Superbas**.  
Brooklyn's record was reduced to 88-42 for having illegally signed a player.
- **St. Louis Browns** were re-named **Perfectos** for 1 year then became known permanently as the Cardinals.
- **Louisville's** stadium burned down – club became a traveling team.
- **Baltimore's** 364 stolen bases was an ML record.
- **Cincinnati** won 14 games in a row.
- **St. Louis'** +45 turnaround thanks to influx of former Cleveland Spiders (see Cleveland Spiders below).

10/15: **Chicago** split 2 games vs. 2 different teams in 1 day. G1: **Beat St. Louis** 7-0. G2: **Lost to Louisville** 9-5 in 8.

- **The once-proud Cleveland Spiders** (finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in 1892, 1895, and 1896) played only 24 games at home.  
Club was also called the Exiles, Misfits, Castoffs, Wanderers, and Forsakens. From July to the end of season, Spiders played remainder of their games on the road (11-102) – many of which were played in Chicago.  
Losing streaks were many: 13, 14, 16, and 24 games; club went 1-27 in September.

**Reason:** Spiders owner **Frank Robinson**, also controlled the St. Louis franchise and depleted his former team of known stars (Cy Young, OF Jesse Burkett, Bobby Wallace, and 2B Cupid Childs), and sent them to the Perfectos.

Spiders won only once in their final 41 games.

Team was outscored 1,252 – 529. Home attendance was 6,088 (250/game).

- Tough year for 3 Cleveland pitchers: Jim Hughey (4-30), Charlie Knepper (4-22) and Frank Bates (1-18).
- Spiders went combined 0-28 vs. Brooklyn and Cincinnati.
- Cleveland's fall from the top was fast. From 1892-1898, club placed 2<sup>nd</sup> 3 times and played .500 ball all 7 years.

***After the 1899 season ended...***

NL dropped the following teams: Cleveland, Louisville, Baltimore, and Washington.

The **Western League** changed to the **American League**. The new league declared themselves a *major league* in 1901.

Boston C **Marty Bergen** killed his wife, 2 children and himself. Bergen's motive was unknown.

**First Year:** OF Ginger Beaumont, P **Joe McGinnity**, Turkey Mike Donlin, P Deacon Phillippe, Tommy Leach, Noodles Hahn, and P **Jack Chesbro**.

# National League

## 1900

<b>Standings</b>		<b>ERA</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>FA</b>
Brooklyn	82-54		.293	
Pittsburgh	79-60	3.07		
Philadelphia	75-63			
Boston	66-72			.953
Chicago	65-75			
St. Louis	65-75			
Cincinnati	62-77			
New York	60-78			

### League:

RULE: Until 1950 – home team was given the option to bat 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup>.

RULE: **BA title champion:** no specific rule was in place.

Through 1920, candidates were to have participated in 60% of the games to qualify.

- **Through 1908, only 1 umpire** supervised each game.
- Washington, Louisville, Baltimore, and Cleveland folded after the 1899 season.  
Louisville and Pittsburgh teams merged; the Cincinnati and NY Giants teams also combined as one.  
Choice of eliminating the Baltimore franchise was perplexing: Orioles were often in 1<sup>st</sup> division.  
  
Louisville owner **Barney Dreyfus** (1900-1931) became new owner of the Pittsburgh franchise.  
After 1899 season ended, Dreyfus shifted **Honus Wagner** and **Tommy Leach** and other Louisville players to Pittsburgh. Wagner won his 1<sup>st</sup> of 8 batting titles.
- **National League owners** were divided over the National Baseball Trust.  
  
James Hart (Chicago), Charles Ebbets (Brooklyn), John Rogers (Philadelphia) and Barney Dreyfus (Pittsburgh) against Andrew Freedman (NY Giants), Arthur Soden (Boston), Frank Robison (St. Louis), and John Brush Cincinnati).  
  
Hart's group defeated Freedman's plan for a **National Baseball Trust** – a holding company for the 8 remaining National League franchises. The Trust would have enabled Freedman's group to own 66% stock.
- **Choosing NL President** was also controversial: Al Spalding vs. Nick Young. NL owners voted 25 times, each ending in a 4-4 tie. NY Giants' owner Freedman walked out, seeking, and eventually receiving an injunction to thwart Spalding's victory. NL had no leader until Harry Pulliam took office in 1902.
- **Protective Association of Professional Baseball Players** – presented their objections to owners' reserve clause.  
Outcome: NL owners rejected the grievances. Association dissolved in 1903. First PPA President: C Chief Zimmer.
- New and improved pitches on scene: the **knuckleball**, the **spitball** (later banned in 1920), and the **screwball** (aka fadeaway) – opposite of curveball, was perfected by NY Giants' Christy Matthewson.
- **Relief pitchers** were called "rescue pitchers."
- **Blue Laws** still prevailed. To date: CWS, Cincinnati, and St. Louis were the only teams that played Sunday baseball.
- **Fielding** was still a challenge:  
CWS/Phil 3B Harry Wolverton: .881 (49 errors)  
Pittsburgh 3B Jimmy Williams: .889 (51 errors)  
NY Giants 3B Piano Legs Hickman: .842 (86-91 errors) – lowest FA for position player
- **NY Giants** P Joe "Iron Man" McGinnity hit ML record 41 batters.
- **Pittsburgh's** Rube Waddell won ERA crown despite 8-13 record.
- The **Western League** moved their Grand Rapids club to Cleveland – later became the Cleveland Indians.

**First Year:** P **Christy Matthewson**. Cincinnati traded him to NYG for P Amos Rusie.  
Matthewson's career numbers: 373-188, 2.13 ERA and 79 shutouts.  
Cincinnati franchise considered this their worst trade in club history.

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