John Russ Found

John Russ, one-game pitcher for Baltimore in 1882 and member of our Top 20 Most Wanted list has been found. For this, Bob Bailey captures the Find of the Month award.

This is one of those cases where we don’t exactly have a smoking gun saying this is the ballplayer, but Bob was able to trace Russ’s career from 1877 through 1885. Only one John Russ lived in Louisville continuously through that time. Bob also discovered that Russ had a nephew who was a semi-pro pitcher indicating at least some semblance of a baseball connection in the family. Bob located a death certificate which contained both his death date and birth date. A terrific job of very difficult research. Replacing Russ on our Top 20 Most Wanted List will be Charles Abbey, who was our February 1990 Mystery of the Month.

Frank Beck

You may notice the code M4 appearing throughout the new data pages. Pete Morris has been busy researching Michigan baseball of the 19th century. Since no one has researched this before, Pete has been finding all sorts of new information. He also managed to track down missing ballplayer Frank Beck.

Pete began by finding a note stating that Beck’s real name was Frank Hengstebeck. When he sent that to me, I checked the 1900-20 Michigan censuses. I found a Frank Hengstebeck who owned an auto parts store in Detroit, was the right age to be the ballplayer, and was born in New York. (We knew that Beck was from Poughkeepsie.)

I sent this back to Pete and he ran the name Hengstebeck through the Social Security Death Index. This yielded the death date of Frank’s son Edward. Pete located the cemetery which also housed Edward’s mother (and Frank’s wife), Margaret. Margaret died in 1935 and her obituary indicated that Frank was still alive. Pete was then able to locate a descendant living in Fairfax, Virginia who provided Frank’s death date. Pete then was able to locate a death certificate that confirmed Frank’s birth in Poughkeepsie. Great work!

From Beck to Burke

Pete also discovered that the record for Walter Burke actually represented the records of two different players. The record with Buffalo in 1882-83 and with Boston (UA) in 1884 actually belongs to James Burke on whom we have no biographical data. The 1887 Detroit entry is Walter Burke, born in Cincinnati, raised in Atchison, Kansas, and died in Memphis. James Burke was 19-15 in 1884 and thus may be the most renowned player we have ever misidentified.

Teddy?

The new book Hitter by Ed Linn is about Ted Williams. One of the pictures in the book is of Williams’ birth certificate. Originally the certificate listed his name as Teddy Samuel Williams and his date of birth as August 20, 1918. The certificate had later been altered and Teddy had been crossed out and Theodore written in and August 20 had been replaced by August 30. Curiously, the doctor who signed it had dated it August 21. Anybody know anything about this?

New Members

Please welcome Tim Hannan, 28 Shady Lane, Fairport, New York 14450 to the committee. Tim’s code number will be H6. Also welcome Jeff Neuman, 135 W. 79th St., Apt. 8D, New York, New York 10024 (N2), William Dunstone,
The SABR Convention

The SABR convention in San Diego was, as usual, a thoroughly enjoyable experience. Our committee meeting was not as well-attended as I would have liked due to it being scheduled at the same time as the minor league committee meeting. However, we did swap ideas about methods for tracking missing ballplayers. If you have never attended a SABR convention, make plans now to attend next year in Arlington.

What's In A Name?

I noticed that the Cubs have a player in their farm system named Hector Trinidad. If he makes the majors he will join Mark Portugal, Osman France, and 10 different guys named Jordan as players named after countries. (And I'm not even counting Chad Curtis and Israel Sanchez).

Get Well Wishes

Two former bio committee chairmen have recently suffered heart attacks. Richard Topp and Cliff Kachline are currently doing fine but you might send them a card. One would hope this isn’t a part of the job.

Birthday List

There are several nonagenarians celebrating birthdays in July. Be sure to send a card.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>July</th>
<th>Lou Brower 93</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 9</td>
<td>Lou Polli 92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 12</td>
<td>Rudel Miller 93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 20</td>
<td>Hunter Lane 93</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 24</td>
<td>Robert Adams 92</td>
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Old McDonald Had A Resurrection

Our Mystery of the Month for June is provided by Pete Morris. We list Dan McDonald of the 1872 Brooklyn Atlantics as dying in Brooklyn November 23, 1880. Pete found an interview in the July 22, 1882 Detroit Free Press with Dickey Pearce in which Pearce mentioned that Dan McDonald of the old Brooklyn Atlantics was presently living in St. Louis.

To add further fuel to the fire, the Brooklyn Atlantics and Philadelphia Athletics played an old-timers game on July 4, 1885 in Philadelphia. McDonald played in the game. So the question is: Who is the McDonald who died in Brooklyn in 1880, and Who played in the old-timers game in 1885? Anyone want to track this down?
<table>
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<th>IN</th>
<th>OUT</th>
<th>PCT</th>
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<td>13874</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>99.484</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Complete Births</td>
<td>13150</td>
<td>796</td>
<td>94.292</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Complete Deaths</td>
<td>6898</td>
<td>482</td>
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<td>6566</td>
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<td>47.082</td>
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<td>Total Bats</td>
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<td>1293</td>
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<td>Total Throws</td>
<td>12815</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Completion</td>
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<td></td>
<td>91.9070</td>
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</table>
George "Yatz" Wuestling

By Bob Tempen

B: October 18, 1903, St. Louis, Missouri
D: April 26, 1970, St. Louis, Missouri
BRTR 5-11 167

A good-field, no-hit infielder, George "Yatz" Wuestling had a ten-year professional career that included nearly two years in the American League in 1929 and 1930. A product of the populous German-American community of St. Louis, Wuestling's nickname is derived from a German pet name for George. But in contemporary sports accounts his given name was more commonly used.

His first professional contract was with Arkansas City (Kan.) club of the Southwestern League in 1924. A third baseman at the time, he hit .280 and led the league with 41 sacrifices. Although he exceeded that average only one season thereafter, he retained a reputation as a competent bunter throughout his career, and his best spot in the batting order was probably second. But he also hit some leadoff, and because of his low averages, he was often placed in the lower third of the lineup.

From Arkansas City he moved to Terre Haute in the Three-Eye League, where he hit .275 in 1925 and earned an invitation to the Cleveland Indians' spring training camp in New Orleans in 1926. He didn't make the cut, however, and was returned to Terre Haute, where he converted to shortstop in midseason, 1926. In 1927 he reached career highs in batting average (.284), doubles (28), and homers (6) and was sold to New Orleans following the season. But he didn't like the Louisiana climate and quit the club during spring training. He stayed home until June, when his contract was sold to Portland of the Pacific Coast League. After 105 PCL games in 1928 and 34 more in 1929, he was sold to the Detroit Tigers, who were desperately seeking shortstop help.

Wuestling made his major league debut in Yankee Stadium on June 15th, but hit only .200 in 54 games and eventually lost the shortstop job to Bill Akers. After playing only 4 games for Detroit in 1930, a Memorial Day trade sent him (along with Harry Rice and Owen Carroll) to New York for an everyday shortstop (Mark Koenig) and pitcher Waite Hoyt. George saw limited action with the Yankees, but being a congenial sort, he made friends with some of that club's high spirits. After the 1930 season he was sold back to Portland. His major league stats show a .183 average in 83 games played.

As Portland's regular shortstop in 1931, Yatz played 167 games and has the distinction of making the first error ever on San Francisco's Seals Stadium, where the Beavers opened the regular season. He was sold to Memphis for 1932 but was released in July after hitting just .213. After sitting out 1933, he rejoined Organized Baseball with Peoria in the Central League in 1934. That league folded in June, and after 40 games with Omaha of the Western League, Wuestling called it quits for good.

He had a family already, and with his brother he ran a meatpacking business in St. Louis, not far from Sportsman's Park. Old teammates would drop by occasionally to feast on the company's products, and George became a local hero for bringing Babe Ruth over to play stickball with the neighborhood youngsters. He died at age 66.
New Monthly Data

Questionnaires Received:

1889 Getinger, Lewis Thomas Leyton
1891 Lally, Daniel J.
No New Information
No New Information

(C1)

(HF)

New Information Received:

1911 Allison, Mack Pendleton
1875 Arundel, Harry
1884 Beck, Frank J.
D: Mount Vernon, Missouri
Height: 5-06  Weight: 145
Real name: Frank J. Hengstebeck
B: Sep 29 1860
D: Feb 8 1941
Detroit, Michigan
Height: 5-09  Weight: 141
(M4)
(M4)

1884 Brown, Joseph E.
1882 Burke, James
New Player
Debut: Jun 10 1882
Absorb 1882-84 record of Walter Burke
B: Cincinnati, Ohio
Debut: Jul 20 1887
(M4)

1882 Burke, Walter R.
(M4)

1883 Burns, Richard Simon
1948 Campanella, Roy
Height: 5-07
D: Jun 26 1993
Woodland Hills, California
C1

(M4)

(M4)

1885 Conway, Peter J.
1886 Devlin, James H.
1880 Dorgan, Jeremiah F.
1906 Doyle, Judd Bruce
1884 Dunn, Stephen
B: Tannersville, New Hampshire
Height: 5-09.5  Weight: 173
(M4)

1887 Eden, Charles M.
BLTL
Name: Robert Vavasour Ferguson
(M4)

1871 Ferguson, Robert V.
1886 Finley, William James
Height: 5-09  Weight: 153
(M4)

1882 Forster, Thomas W.
Height: 5-08.5  Weight: 155
(M4)

1884 Gastfield, Edward
BL
(M4)

1907 Graham, Oscar M.
1903 Grey, Romer Carl
BLTL
(M4)

1887 Gruber, Henry John
Height: 5-09  Weight: 155
(M4)

1994 Harper, George B.
BRTR  Height: 5-10  Weight: 165
(M4)

1933 Henshaw, Roy Knicklebine
D: Jun 8 1993
La Grange, Illinois
(S7)

1966 Hepler, William Lewis
B: Covington, Virginia
Delete death date. Wrong player.
(S1)

1884 Horan, John J.
Name: P.J. Horan
Height: 5-10.5  Weight: 160
(M4)

1884 Jones, Henry M.
Name: Henry Monroe Jones
BR  Height: 5-06  Weight: 149
(M4)

1882 Lane, George M.
BR  B: Troy, New York
(M4)

1884 Lavin, John
D: Chicago, Illinois
(B6)

1912 McGehee, Patrick Henry

Bio Report

5

June 1993
1883 McIntyre, Frank W.
1884 McLaughlin, James Thomas
1884 Miller, Joseph A.
1936 Mize, John Robert

1884 Moffett, Samuel R.
1884 Moore, Jeremiah S.
1884 Morrissey, Thomas J.
1884 Morrison, Jonathan W.
1882 Morton, Charles Hazen
1883 Mountjoy, William R.
1884 Myers, George D.
1884 O'Day, Henry Francis
1955 Phillips, John Melvin

1883 Radbourn, George B.
1872 Remsen, John J.
1884 Richardson, Arthur L.
1882 Russ, John

1890 Sales, Edward A.
1886 Sowders, Leonard
1888 Sowders, William Jefferson
1882 Thompson, John P.
1882 Tilley, John C.
1884 Tray, James
1942 Tucker, Thurman Lowell

1941 Wakefield, Richard Cummings
1884 Walker, Moses Fleetwood
1884 Walker, Walter S.
1883 Ward, Frank Gray
1880 Weidman, George Edward
1890 Whistler, Lewis
1904 White, John Wallace
1878 Williamson, Edward Nagle

B: Jul 12 1859
   Walled Lake, Michigan
   BL Weight: 157
   BR
   D: Jun 2 1993
      Demorest, Georgia
   BR
   Height: 5-11  Weight: 170
   Height: 5-11  Weight: 180
   BL Height: 5-09.5  Weight: 167
   BR Weight: 150
   Height: 5-06  Weight: 150
   Height: 5-08  Weight: 170
   Height: 6-00  Weight: 180
   B: Feb 24 1928
      Hattiesburg, Mississippi
   D: Jun 22 1993
      Weight: 160
      Name: John Jay Remsen
      Height: 5-04  Weight: 136
      B: Apr 1 1860
         Cannelton, Indiana
      D: Jan 18 1912
         Louisville, Kentucky
   BL
   Height: 5-11.5  Weight: 172
   Weight: 155
   Height: 5-08
   Height: 5-07  Weight: 154
   Height: 5-11  Weight: 180
   D: May 7 1993
      Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
   D: Redford, Michigan
   Weight: 159
   TR Height: 5-10.5  Weight: 162
   TR
   Height: 5-07.5  Weight: 165
   Height: 5-10.5  Weight: 178
   B: Traders Point, Indiana
   Weight: 210