GREETINGS, NEW ENGLAND SABR-ITES!

Between-Season Reading
Count on John Vorperian to keep you are some recommendations for reading to keep you baseball-minded until spring training.

**NOW TAKING THE FIELD:** Baseball’s All-Time Dream Teams for All 30 Franchises, by Tom Stone (ACTA Sports). Who’s on first. What’s on second. And there’s no I don’t know in the lineup. WAR, traditional stats, awards, postseason performance, shake them up and you get a 30-man roster for all 30 MLB teams. Plus, Stone compares his *Now Taking the Field* picks against other past authors and fan surveys. Hey, there is even a DH in the NL! Yes, I do agree for the Bucs (Ralph Kiner) and Reds (Ted Kluszewski) but the Cubs’ Bill Nicholson? No, give the DH stick to King Kelly.

**OSCAR CHARLESTON:** The Life and Legend of Baseball’s Greatest Forgotten Player, by Jeremy Beer (University of Nebraska Press). “Ty Cobb, Babe Ruth, and Tris Speaker rolled into one.” That was how Buck O’Neil described Oscar Charleston. He was a player-manager in the Negro Leagues in the 1920s and 1930s, but it’s the 1940s that connect Charleston’s pursuit of excellence with MLB. Brooklyn Dodgers owner Branch Rickey tapped him as a scout for the organization, and he performed this task up through his death, having recommended several outstanding players, including catcher Roy Campanella. Beer makes a convincing case that Charleston is the greatest baseball player never to play in the majors.

**LEFT ON BASE IN THE BUSH LEAGUES:** Legends, Near Greats, and Unknowns in the Minors, by Gaylon H. White (Rowman & Littlefield). 1949 was the high-water mark for the minors: 59 leagues 464 cities with teams; bushers were stars in their hamlets. *Left on Base’s* cover speaks volumes. The image is from Life magazine and its Dodgertown and Class C and D players. Jackie was on the parent club but the farm clubs? Well, judge for yourself. One key chapter pertains to Pat Stasey, a mellow Irishman who “Cubanized” minor-league baseball in Texas and New Mexico, helping to bring down the walls of segregation. And another fine story is the one about Ron Necciai, the only pitcher in history to strike out 27 batters in a single game.

**CHUMPS TO CHAMPS:** How the Worst Teams in Yankees History Led to the 90’s Dynasty, by Bill Pennington (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt). As a Red Sox fan here in enemy territory (Westchester County), the opening chapter pleasurably swelled my brain with fond memories of the 1989-1992 NY Yuckees (total W/L record 288-359). Whether it be the fiascos on the field or intra-organizational intrigues within the front office and with the talent (Boss vs. Dave Winfield) it’s a great read on Baseball’s Teflon Team. Like the Phoenix, the Pinstripers rose up from the ’89-92 ashes. Fired up with the Core 4 Jeter, Rivera, Posada, and Pettitte, the Bombers return to gathering postseason banners to fly over their sandlot in the Bronx. Yeah, Chumps to Champs.
**ROD GASPAR: Miracle Met**, by Rod Gaspar with David Russell (BPB Publications). In his one full season with the NY Metropolitan, Gaspar played in 118 games which help lead to a 1969 World Series championship. Gaspar predicted that the Mets would win the fall classic in a four-game sweep. And they did – if you discount Game One. The *Miracle Met* recalls the ’69 season, life growing up in California, his time with the Padres and the Hawaii Islanders, a post-baseball career and his spiritual relationship. Oh yes, nonbaseball 1969 tales are included as well. TV appearances on *The Dating Game, The Ed Sullivan Show* and singing with Don Ho.

*John Vorperian hosts BEYOND THE GAME, a community-syndicated cable TV program in NY, parts of the U.S. and at wpcommunitymedia.org.*

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**Trivia**

**Smashers.** Mookie Betts, we know, has had four three-homer games. Who is the only other player active in the 2019 season who also had four?

**Big bat.** This past season an American League outfielder became the first player to hit his 100th home run before getting his 100th single. Who was this masher?

**All-Star star.** What Hall of Fame pitcher started five of the first six All-Star Game?

**That many?** Not counting Alex Cora, no fewer than seven major-league managers in 2019 were Red Sox alumni. How many can you name?

**Old basher.** What Hall of Famer is the oldest player to have a three-homer game?

**Baby basher.** Who is the youngest player to win a major-league batting championship?

**Slab ace.** What pitcher led the Dodgers in career wins before they moved to Los Angeles?

**Age no obstacle.** Who is the only player to get 200 hits in his age-40 season or older.

**Sterling pair.** Who were the last pitching teammates to finish 1-2 in the Cy Young Award voting? (One is a former Bostonian.)

**Grand theft.** Who holds the record for the most stolen bases in a single World Series?

**Old slugger.** Who is the oldest player to hit a home run in his first World Series plate appearance?

**This may surprise you.** Who is the only pitcher to appear in an All-Star Game in the 1970s, ’80s, and ’90s?

**Savior.** Who is the only pitcher to have a season in which he earned more saves than he allowed baserunners?
Trivia answers

Smashers. Albert Pujols.

Big bat. Joey Gallo, Texas Rangers.

All-Star star. Lefty Gomez, who started the midsummer classic for the AL in 1933-35 and 1937-38.

That many? Torey Lovullo, Diamondbacks; Terry Francona, Indians; Rocco Baldelli, Twins; Bob Melvin, A’s; Gabe Kapler, Phillies; Kevin Cash, Rays; Dave Roberts, Dodgers.

Old basher. Stan Musial (41 years and 229 days old when he did it against the Mets on July 8, 1962).

Baby basher. Al Kaline, 20 years old when he led the American League with a .340 batting average in 1955.

Slab ace. Hall of Famer Dazzy Vance, with 190 career victories.

Age no obstacle. Hall of Famer Sam Rice, who at the age of 40 had 207 hits in his 1930 season with the Senators.

Sterling pair. Randy Johnson and Curt Schilling, on the 2001 and 2002 Diamondbacks.


Old slugger. Barry Bonds (38 years and 87 days old in the 2002 World Series).

This may surprise you. Dennis Eckersley.

Savior. The same Dennis Eckersley, who in 1990 with the Athletics had 48 saves while allowing just 47 baserunners.

R.I.P. Jim Archer (Kansas City A’s 1961-62); Jim Bouton (Yankees 1962-68, Seattle Pilots ’69, Astros ’69, Braves ’78); Terry Bovey (National League umpire 1979, ’84, ’95); Ernie Bowman (Giants 1961-63); Ernie Broglio (Cardinals 1959-64, Cubs ’64-66); Jean “Buckets” Buckley (Kenosha Comets, AAGPBL, 1950-51, Rockford Peaches ’52); Bill Buckner (Dodgers 1969-76, Cub ’77-84, Red Sox ’84-87, Angels ’87-88, Royals ’88-89, Red Sox ’90); Truman “Tex” Clevenger (Red Sox 1954, Washington Senators ’56-60, Angels ’61, Yankees ’61-62); Eric Cooper (major-league umpire 1996-2018); Bobby Del Greco (Pirates 1952, ’56, Cardinals ’56, Cubs ’57, Yankees ’57-58, Phillies ’60-61, KC Athletics ’61-63, Philllies ’65); Chris Duncan (Cardinals 2005-09); Aubrey Gatewood (Angels 1963-65, Braves ’70); Alex Grammas (Cardinals 1954-56, Reds ’56-58, Cardinals ’59-62, Cubs ’62-63; manager Pirates 1969, Brewers ’76-77); Elijah “Pumpsie” Green (Red Sox 1959-62, Mets ’63); Jim Greengrass (Reds 1952-55, Philllies ’55-56); Joe Grzenda (Tigers 1961, Kansas City A’s ’64, ’66, Mets ’67, Twins ’69, Senators ’70-71, Cardinals ’72); Jackie Hernandez (Angels 1965-66, Twins ’67-68, Royals ’69-70, Pirates ’71-73); Larry Howard (Astros 1970-73, Braves ’73); Jake Jaeckel (Cubs 1964); Tom Jordan (White Sox 1944, ’46, Indians ’46, St. Louis Browns ’48; oldest living player); Joe Keough (Athletics 1968, Royals ’69-72, White Sox ’73); Gary Kolb (Cardinals 1960, ’62-63, Milwaukee Braves ’64-65, Mets ’65, Pirates ’68-69); Barry Latman (White Sox 1957-59, Indians ’60-63, Angels ’64-65, Astros ’66-67); Frank Lucchesi (manager Phillies 1970-72, Rangers ’75-77, Cubs ’87); Joan Martin (South Bend Blue Sox, AAGPBL, 1951); Luis Mercedes (Orioles 1991-93, Giants ’93); Glenn Mickens (Brooklyn Dodgers 1953); Bill Mills (Philadelphia A’s 1944, former R.I. resident); Bobby Mitchell (Yankees 1970-71, Brewers ’73-75); Jose
L’envoi. To the Red Sox fans among us: Congratulations! To Tom Zocco and his fellow Dodgers fans: Sorry. This meeting will be an end and a beginning: the end (at least to us) of the 2018 baseball season and the beginning of the countdown to the 2019 campaign. Emphasizing again: If you plan to come to St. Philip’s, please make sure you RSVP. See you there.

Len Levin
SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND SABR REGIONAL MEETING

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2019: 11:00 A.M.—4:00 P.M.
ST. PHILIP’S PARISH CENTER, ROUTE 44, GREENVILLE, R.I.

THE PROGRAM

1. Guest speaker: LENNY DiNARDO, former Red Sox pitcher, NESN analyst
2. Research presentations
3. Mock Hall of Fame election/“expulsion”
4. Trivia contest
5. Baseball book raffle
6. Ballpark lunch, refreshments, lots of good baseball talk

$7.00 donation to cover expenses. $1.00 for children under 12.

HOW TO GET TO ST. PHILIP’S

• From the north: From Route 95 (in Mass.) or Route 146 (in R.I.), take Route 295 south. Take Exit 12B off 295 onto Rhode Island Route 44 westbound. St. Philip’s is about 2.5 miles from the exit, on your left after you pass through “downtown” Greenville (lots of fast-food places). Use the driveway between the school and the church. Park in the parish center parking lot (plenty of room if you get there early).

• From the south: In Rhode Island, take Route 95 north to Route 295 north. On 295, take Exit 12B and follow directions above.

• West from Providence: Route 10 and then Route 6 to northbound Route 295. Take Exit 12B as above. The entrance to Route 10 is just above downtown Providence, next to the Providence Place mall. The Rhode Island State House will be to your right.

• From the east: Route 195 westbound to Route 95 northbound in Providence. Near downtown Providence, follow the sign that says Hartford. Follow Route 10 to Route 6 to northbound Route 295 and proceed as above.

• From northeastern Connecticut: On Route 44 eastbound, St. Philip’s is about 14 miles from the state line; if you come on Route 6 eastbound, take Route 116 northbound to Route 44 west. St. Philip’s is just a few hundred feet west of the intersection of Routes 116 and 44.

Please RSVP to Len Levin at 401-351-3278 or LenLevin5@hotmail.com