

Society for American Baseball Research Collegiate Baseball Committee Newsletter May 2003 (03-2)

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By the time this newsletter reaches you, the Committee will have posted all major league players from NCAA Division I universities and colleges to our website (<http://www.ncaa-baseball.com/sabr>). There are a total of 327 Division I schools (in 31 different conferences) with their own pages. Throughout the summer, we will continue to post pages for various colleges. For Division II-III and NAIA schools, we will only post a page for a school that has produced one or more major leaguers (confirmed or unconfirmed). We want to thank all of you who have contributed information, from adding new names, deleting existing ones and going to libraries to checking with sports information offices.

REMINDER!

Don't forget to make your plans to attend the SABR national convention, if you haven't already done so. Our committee will meet at 1:00PM for an hour on Friday afternoon, July 11th. Other activities, such as attending a Colorado Rockies game at Coors Field on Friday night, will make this a great meeting for all those who attend.

Currently, most of the work being done by the Committee has focused on getting information posted to our website. It is you, the researchers and committee members, who will determine the extent to which information will be gathered and disseminated. Some of you have already contributed and the Committee thanks you so much for your efforts. Our co-chairman Rick Benner has done much of the leg work and we want him to share his experiences in gathering information from the colleges. Here are his thoughts about the last several months:

This may be a semi-regular feature since I love to travel and visit schools. Over the past couple of years, I've researched at over 50 colleges with varying results. My most recent trip, at the end of April, was my most ambitious yet. Preparation is the key to any trip. I like to email the Archives Department of the university library to find out the name of the yearbook, where they are located, whether they will be available to me, the best place to park and the hours that the library will be open. Most archivists are more than willing to assist, if you let them know the purpose of the visit.

I left Atlanta on a Saturday and headed toward Saint Louis, a reasonable day's drive. My first stop was Saint Louis University. I had already been warned by the SID that their records were a mess, but I thought that a review of the student yearbooks would bring great reward. When ego headbutts reality, reality always wins. The yearbooks too were a mess. Most years there was no mention of a baseball team. I don't know if the school didn't have a team or whether it just wasn't worth mentioning. Some years there were photos, but no names. If you can locate a player as a senior, sometimes the bio with his picture can provide details of his athletic career. No luck there either. I got Ray Schmandt confirmed and eliminated Neal Hertweck, but everyone else remains undetermined. A mile down the road is Washington University. There were a number of yearbooks missing, but I was able to nail down three players and eliminate two. Fair enough, I guess. I dropped by the Athletic Office to see about picking up a media guide and sharing my results with the SID, but there was no one there. I took a chance and drove to Meramec CC, but they were also closed.

The next day, my first two fantasies were Missouri Valley College and the University of Missouri. UM was not all that important because I had some pretty good information already, but I had 8 or so players that I wanted to look up. I work with a guy who played football at Missouri Valley and one of their players is a former Boston Brave, Lou Fette, so I was excited about going there. However, the UM library did not open until 1 pm and MVC even later and I didn't waste the four hours it would take to wait for them to open. Another pitfall of these trips are the paucity of libraries open on Sunday. I couldn't sweet talk my way into getting the Baker University (Baldwin City, KS) library to open, but I was able to get the archivist to provide a detailed biography on George W. (Zip) Zabel, so a visit wasn't necessary. So Sunday's only college ended up being Emporia State. Fred Kipp confirmed, but nothing else accomplished. It was not a good start. I spent the night in Hays, KS, but did not bother to stop by Fort Hays State to see if the SID was still there at 7 pm on a Sunday night.

It was Finals Week so there was little danger of the libraries closing early, but timing had to be right to make sure I didn't arrive too early at my target schools. As a result, I had a long drive on Monday, even if I didn't stop at any schools, but that was the purpose of the trip, wasn't it? First stop on Monday is the University of Denver. They don't currently have a baseball team, but I have five possible players. One of those names was provided by the archivist. The player's name is Henry Lipschitz, and he played in the majors as Bostick. When I got to archives, the archivist wasn't there, but two ladies were and they assisted me by pulling out boxes of baseball clippings and the yearbooks I requested. The two most recent players, Dan Schatzeder and Craig Stimac were confirmed. I found

Lipschitz in the 1915 yearbook and Boston Brave Ray Boggs in the 1925 yearbook, but neither yearbook mentioned what year the baseball listing was for. In early yearbooks, often the baseball pages are for the baseball team one or two years previous to the date of the yearbook. No mention was found of the fifth man, Jack Tising. I've got to follow back up with them to see if I can get the attendance dates of Boggs and Lipschitz and perhaps nail them that way. Next stop was the University of Colorado in Boulder. Amazingly enough, I didn't even see the Rockies until the fog lifted just as I entered the campus. Good results there. Four confirmed and three eliminated. Surprising that Colorado would have only 4 major leaguers. From University of Colorado, I drove into Wyoming intending to stop by the University of Wyoming, but time was getting short and I had a long way to go, so I made the painful decision of bypassing the Cowboys.

The next day was destined to be a long one. from western Wyoming into Utah then north into Idaho and west to Oregon. The University of Utah turned out to be a mixed blessing. They did not have a baseball team from 1922-47, so that eliminated the possibles. I called the SID to see if my research was accurate and it was news to her. Their records, she said, were incomplete and sorely lacking. This is a disturbing trend around campuses these days. Utah State turned out differently. The information was there, sort of. Jay Van Noy was prominent in the yearbooks and school newspapers, but as a football player and actor. Nothing about baseball. I think I'll keep him around as a possible since the baseball rosters of that era weren't complete. I made my way to College of Southern Idaho just as practice was ending and managed to spend some time with long-time CSI baseball coach Skip Walker. He discussed with me the history of his program and confirmed some of the names I had for him. I didn't make it to Oregon, so I spent the night in Nampa, ID.

Another ambitious day was ahead, but ambition doesn't always lead to success. I arrived at Eastern Oregon University just as everything was opening. I had no major leaguers to check out, but I stopped by to introduce myself to the SID and picked up a media guide. Since eastern Oregon is as far as I can drive from Atlanta in one week, I made the turn at Pendleton then northeasterly to Walla Walla, Washington, home of Whitman College. I wasn't prepared to stop there, but sometimes it's difficult to avoid a school when I'm so close. I found the SID, but they didn't have any media guides. He asked me who the major leaguer was from Whitman and I choked. I named Ray Washburn (who played at Whitworth in Spokane) but qualified it with not being sure. Good job, Rick (the player was Tony Criscola). I tucked my tail between my legs and headed for Lewiston, ID, stopping at Lewis-Clark State. The SID was at lunch and time was short, so I couldn't wait. LCSU was hosting the NAIA College World Series the following weekend and they offered to send me the WS media guide when available. I was particularly disappointed since I had a number of players from there that I hoped to get years played for. Time was getting tighter. My only route east across the Rockies was US 12 from Lewiston to Missoula MT unless I wanted to go about 80 miles further north to the Interstate. I didn't know what the conditions might be, so I made another difficult decision. Original route plan had me going 30 miles north to Pullman and Washington State University then to the library at the University of Idaho to check out some players. It was after 2 PM and I decided that I'd better get onto US 12 and head toward Missoula. It turned out to be a good decision since there was a lot of construction on the two-lane highway, closing

down one lane and in several places we were stopped for 15 minutes or more to allow traffic in the other direction to move. I arrived in Missoula well after 8 PM.

Thursday was scheduled to be a light day for me and it was. The only college I figured on visiting was Montana State University in Bozeman. There has never been a major league player who played at a Montana college (or North Dakota and Alaska either), but I wanted to stop by and see Bill Lamberty, the SID there, who is also a SABR member. Unfortunately, he was in a meeting, and I had to move on. I drove back into Wyoming and spent the night in Gillette.

Friday was also to be a light day, with two colleges to visit, but South Dakota is a much bigger state than it looks on the map and though the speed limit is 75, I just didn't make very good time. It was a rewarding day though. I saw Mount Rushmore for the first time and it was magnificent! The air was cool and it wasn't crowded and I felt very proud being there. From patriotic to cheesy, I made the requisite stop at Wall Drug, then the long drive to South Dakota State University in Brookings. I got there just as they were locking up and picked up a media guide and strolled through the Hall of Fame. That meant though that I was not going to make the University of South Dakota during working hours. My motel reservation was in Fort Dodge, IA, but every mile I drove, every mile it seemed to get further away. I didn't arrive until after 10 PM. Of course, it wasn't that bad, after all I did lose an hour from Mountain Time to Central Time.

Saturday was a cram day- cram everything you can into the day because the next day you have to go home. First stop was Iowa State University. Good pickin's there as I got years for many of the players I was seeking. On to Cornell College. I found two of their possibles and eliminated one other. Not bad. I went to the gym and met the new Athletic Director there, but she had absolutely no information on the baseball program, no media guide, no history, nothing. I looked at the plaques on the wall which represented the Hall of Famers, but didn't recognize anyone as a major leaguer. I traveled the backroads of Iowa all day (do they even have any Interstates?). Next stop was the Fairfield Library. They have a collection of Parsons College yearbooks which I hope to peruse. Parsons closed in 1973, but had an awesome baseball program in the mid-1960s, producing six major leaguers. They played a spring schedule then a summer one and had an overall record of 72-15 in 1966 and 31-2 and a #2 ranking in the spring of 1967.

Dick Mills, Tom Heintzleman and Charlie Williams (once traded for Willie Mays) all played on the 1966 team, with Rich Folkers and Jim Todd replacing Mills on the 1967 team. I got to the library 30 minutes before closing time and was unable to do much more than confirm the playing years for those 6 players (the 6th was Don Mason, who preceded the others). I sure would like to know if they had more major leaguers back in the day. I made the 22 mile drive over to Iowa Wesleyan College, but the college library closed as I was getting out of my car. Apparently my charm has insufficient as I was unable to change the student assistant's mind about reopening. I thought about trying again at Missouri Valley, but the time of day and distance, and the fact that I was worn out, made the decision for me.

This is the most recent of the trips that I have taken in the past year or so in search of college baseball information. Sometimes the trips are very successful and sometimes not. You can't locate what is not there. I'm surprised at the condition of the records at so many colleges. Many an SID have told me to let them know what I find out. This summer I've got weekend trips to Memphis and Nashville planned, and possibly one into Louisiana. I'm heading up to New Hampshire for a week in late summer and hope to visit Maryland, Georgetown, Villanova, Lehigh, Lafayette, Boston College, Tufts, Harvard, Northeastern, Boston U. and Maine. Ambitious? Yes, but worth it, I hope.

Do you have a story to tell? We'd love to hear it and share it with our researchers.

In addition to thanking webmaster Jeremy Mills and e-mail coordinator Bruce Brown for their continuing help, we want to acknowledge the assistance and correspondence from several other committee members, including Bill Simpson (who provided some insight into an oldtime Oregon State player), Jack Weiss (former player at Parsons), Steve Eschenbach (who is writing a book on Ivy League major leaguers), Bill Lamberty (Montana State sports information director), Joel Rippel (who provided much of the information on Minnesota college) and Marc Okkonen, among others. Bill Madden reports that he's printing more of his College World Series Record Books so contact him at (317)842-9856 or via e-mail at wmadden@peoplepc.com.

We have a wealth of additional information so another newsletter will follow within about two weeks.