

July 24, 2009

Raising the BAR, Greatest Games Ever

My recent rove in the “treasured trove” found me finding a curiously dated missive entitled Scrap Book! Aside from the intriguing doubled meaning, the proceeding content made me more than content--it was a 1977 formula Barry called the **BAR (Base Appearance Relation)**.

The BAR was a prequel to the BOP that Codell chose not to publish, which for the first time enumerates Barry’s batting bases numerator, TB + BB + HP, shown as “actual bases.” His denominator (plate appearances x 4) was termed “possible bases.” The absence of outs in the formula led me to think this was the reason the BAR remained a “Gnostic statistic” (which was confirmed in today’s conversation with Codell—the BOP soon followed). At any rate, (or more specifically, actual per possible), let’s put the BAR on the leader board--yes!

A second discovery was neatly though disparately placed in a group of Codell’s “Batter’s Box Scores.” Labeled “Greatest Games Ever,” it revealed the shortest of lists, using Barry Code stats to make its riveting points. It was simply this:

1. “Greatest Batter’s Game” (GBB)-- must be perfect (no outs!)

Shawn Green – 22.5 AvBa/O outs (May 23, 2002)

2. “Greatest Pitcher’s Game” (GPB) – must be perfect game

Sandy Koufax – 0 baserunners, 14 NCDA (September 9, 1965)

Impossible to argue, now we know!

Green’s 19 batting bases and 26 tallied bases from his 6 for 6, 4-homer game gave him the 22.5 Averaged Bases.

Koufax’s 14 strikeouts without walk of hit batsman accounts for his Non-Contact Differential Average, making him, by the way, the only pitcher ever to fan over half (51.9%) of batters faced in a perfect game! I add the runner-ups: for batters, **Jim Bottomley, 21.5 AvBa/O outs** (September 16, 1924); for pitchers, **Randy Johnson, 0 baserunners, 13 NCDA** (May 18, 2004).

Speaking of unique pitching and hitting games, Barry mentioned yesterday’s perfect game by **Mark Buerhle**, as usual in a new light, recalling an August 3, 2001 game at the Cell. He said **Buerhle** was just warming up for his record-setting run of 3 shutouts, facing only 27 batters, when he beat Tampa Bay 4-0, facing only 28 batters during his first season as a Sox starter. Of course, Buehrle’s July 21, 2004 14-0 shutout in Cleveland facing 27 batters was

furthered by his 2007 no-hitter and yesterday's perfect masterpiece. Recording 27 outs, facing 27 batters has become Buerhle's trademark.

Barry reminded that Buerhle's third "27-batters-faced beauty" broke a tie with Sandy Koufax and Cy Young, but said his favorite unmatchable (and uncredited) pitching feat is still the Sox's Bobby Jenks recording 50 outs facing 50 batters in 2007!

Prodding him for more hitters' uniqueness, he rattled off three names with games for the ages: Willie Mays, Davey Lopes and Eric Young. Mays, he said, was the only man to have both a 4-homer and a 4-SB game during his career, Lopes the only one with a 3-HR and a 5-SB game, and Young alone with both a 2-HR and a 6-SB game!

Thanks to Barry and those "Grand Sons of Barry," the Code Talkers!

The Don