

The *Global Baseball* Page: A Chronological Recap

{This first piece was released in the late autumn of 2016, as I continued to build my Trutholio.com site in general and was in the process of developing the *Global Baseball* page as the seventh and last page of that website. Most pieces in this recap will be dated with more precision. Anything added to the original material *in this recap* will be found between brackets of the type used here; *original* bracketed sections are set off by this type: [], so old brackets = standard/straight, and new brackets = the squiggly ones, as used in this paragraph.}

For one individual in particular (myself), this is the ultimate baseball research dream project, and the light at the end of the tunnel is in sight. In early 2017, I hope to reveal to fans of any part of Major League Baseball history (1871 through 2016) a whole new "What if?" perspective. Season re-play enthusiasts especially should find much to love about this new foray into what I call, "retro-specumetrics." But from the angle of curiosity about BIRTHPLACES, well, just about everybody will take an interest in the raw data I've painstakingly assembled. The possibilities for applications are limited only by the boundaries of the imagination, but I'm providing an unprecedented framework and launching pad. Exciting stuff is coming!

12/2/16 -- Catch-the-fever teaser #1. Download PDF here:
Birthplace numbers.pdf

{This was current through the 2016 MLB season.}

[Old text moved from Home page preserved below]

Throughout 2015 and thus far in 2016, my baseball history replay project has claimed the lion's share of my work schedule, and I expect that to be the case for the rest of this year as well. Sometime in early 2017, Lord willing, I'll have at least one book to offer, and a larger package is planned. Because this truly unique exercise in what may be called "retro-specu-metrics" could well lead to a marketable publication or series (provide actual income!), I don't want to tip my hand too much about its design, goals, and techniques. However, I do intend to periodically release some "leaks" to whet the appetite. Extensive data entry is still ongoing, and will be necessary, as the scope of this project extends from 1871 through 2016, the first 146 years of Major League Baseball (Negro Leagues included where possible). It's a big chunk of work for a staff of one!

[Old text carried over from the now-defunct National Past-time Baseball page below; I plan to pull these bits and pieces together into a more coherent whole in the near future]

I've decided to let this much out of the bag: the aim of this project is to make some educated guesses as to which regions

of America -- and later on, the globe -- could have produced the best teams of players throughout the various eras of Major League Baseball history. An intriguing concept, isn't it? I can hardly imagine that nobody else has ever thought to do this, namely, to reassemble the nearly 20,000 historical (and current) MLB players onto viable squads defined by birthplace. "Ah, so that's what he's up to," you say (if you hadn't already guessed, or had never met me in the last 2 or 3 decades).

But something I do know full well is this: there can hardly be a more time-intensive endeavor, especially if you care enough about an honest (and chronological) approach, accuracy in the data, and above all, overall plausibility, to do the thing right. I ended up scrapping the work of more than a year's worth of full-time weeks because I could see that the initial program design on which I'd decided had flaws: I'd treated the entire 30-year span of 19th Century MLB history (1871-1900) as one homogeneous league, despite the many important rule changes and the widely-varying leagues that popped in and out within that period; because I desired to err on the side of inclusiveness -- desiring to get as many players involved as possible, I'd included African-Americans Sol White, Bill Monroe, and Harry Hyde (who?), though none of them logged any time in the recognized major leagues of that century, but had some Western League and pre-Negro-League stats that I'd convinced myself could be thrown into the mix with the rest (same deal with the Union Association; in an article penned by Bill James and only recently read by yours truly, that one-

year, sub-par aggregation was shown to be less than a true major league; he convinced me, and I no longer am including UA players in my replay plan).

In any case, I'm being only slightly less secretive now for a good reason or two. First, if you want to steal "my" idea, I can't stop you, but be prepared for a tremendous amount of tedious data- culling and analysis, constant roster formation and *re*-formation throughout 146 years of baseball, line-up and pitching rotation setting for each and every team in each and every "time machine" season replay, and.....pew!....I mean, you really have to want to do this. It is a *time*-pit!

Which brings us to the other reason for spilling the beans (well, some of 'em). I have no doubt that a small group of super-computer-armed sabermetricians could accomplish the aims of this, my dream project, in a matter of days if they chose to do so. And because they do this sort of thing for a living, they'd almost certainly do it with a professional integrity that I simply can't match. But I hope they'll let me stumble through this to the end and release my findings in a book or two. Because every baseball fan was born somewhere, and wouldn't it be kinda cool to get a good idea about how your "locals" would have fared against teams composed entirely of natives of other states, regions, or countries?

Here's a quick teaser that demonstrates the kind of thing we're talking about. All of these Hall-of-Famers were born in the

same state; Hank Aaron, Willie Mays, Willie McCovey, Billy Williams, Ozzie Smith, Joe Sewell, Satchel Paige, Monte Irvin, Heinie Manush, Don Sutton, and Early Wynn. This is what started it all for me, I have to say. When I read the backs of those old baseball cards that gave the player's hometown (though not necessarily the place of birth in that pre-encyclopedia era), patterns began to emerge before my eyes, my curiosity grew, and it has been sustained to this day. As objectively as possible, I'd like to get to the "truth" relative to baseball's geographical-historical panorama: From which areas and which eras have the very best collections of ballplayers been assembled, and without free agency, trades, or player purchases? I'd sure like to find out. Wouldn't you?

That's what I'm up to, and I've re-tooled in order to get there. Please check back in the ensuing months as baseball's entire history is about to be re-written?... well, no,...but seen from a whole new angle. Fun stuff!

5/15/17 UPDATE: (Regarding what's been posted below {previously, in late 2016}, and what's currently in the works).

As I hinted on the Home page, the utterly time-consuming research and data-entry phase of this baseball history "replay" project is nearing completion (roughly 2-3% to go, for 146 seasons' worth of raw data from the Major Leagues -- 1871 through 2016 -- AND the Negro Leagues).

Very soon, then, the real fun begins! While *I* have most of the answers already on hand, *you* will not, at least until I release 'em from time to time. That's where the "leaks" and "Catch-the-fever teasers" come in, so start watching for those FREE items.

In a related matter, I'm considering options for marketing the final product(s) (*e.g.*, self-publish/ Xulon Press/ subscription support plan/ "donate" to SABRE or baseball-reference.com and/or seamheads.com, etc.). I'd like your help with that, so I'm adding a new e-mail address just for that purpose:
gb@trutholio.com

So please send suggestions and indications of interest there. It will be greatly appreciated, and your list of freebies and special considerations might well grow, too.

In any case, and as always: Thanks for dropping in!

*****6/3/17 UPDATE: With the data foundation now in place, the real fun can soon begin. I have plans to make next week (June 5-10) a "leak week," when interested parties will be able to piece together the real extent and widespread utility of the products yielded by this several-years-long, birthplace-based baseball research. Lovers of Major League (and Negro League) baseball history, gamers (season replay enthusiasts fond of computer-based games like my favorite, *Old Time*

Baseball), and sabermetricians (pro and amateur alike), will immediately see the value of these PDF publications and (update-enabled) Excel/Works spreadsheets. An entire "alternative baseball universe" is about to unfold before your eyes (if I may be so bold to use that figure of speech; read: IMHO). In any case, this is -- to the best of my knowledge -- unprecedented and unique, and certainly a whole new way of looking at baseball as it might have been. Stay tuned!

Monday, June 5: Leak/Catch-the-fever-teaser #1

What's taking shape

Yes, the final output (hard-copy product line) is a ways off yet, but this decades-old vision is taking on real substance, and some glimpses are available to you right now. Here's the first batch, in bullet-point form;

- + Basic premise #1: All of the roughly 12,000 qualifying* players from MLB and 20th-Century Negro League history have been "re-assigned" to teams based solely/strictly on place of birth. It makes no difference where a fellow grew up or spent most of his life; the area in which he was *born* defines his team for life (no trades, no free agency; you play your entire career for the locals, whether that's defined -- in various league formats -- by city, state, region, nation, or global region (users of this data can find any number of ways to configure leagues of

various scopes)).

+ This is a WAR (Wins Above Replacement)-based system. With all due respect for the ingenious Mr. Bill James and his Win Shares system, WAR data is just so readily available and easier with which to work. The WAR figures I'm using have been supplied at baseball-reference.com and seamheads.com, my two indispensable and favorite project-building sites (see to left). {These were two sidebar links. Since then, I have found a *third* indispensable site: www.thebaseballgauge.com.} It should be noted, too, that I started out using the Batter-Fielder/ Pitcher Wins numbers (Pete Palmer's Total Player Ratings) that appeared in the Total Baseball and ESPN Baseball encyclopedias; they provided the original statistical framework. But when that data became increasingly scarce, and WAR was all the rage, I re-tooled from scratch. It seems to me that WAR is the stat language most commonly spoken and used, so that's the way I went.

+ Determining the winning team for a given season (1871 through 2016) is fairly straightforward: 1) which state/ nation could put an honestly representative team on the field (by which I mean, covering each position with sufficient plate appearances and defensive innings (observing positional integrity, allowing only a bare minimum of shifts that actually occurred in historical careers), and having enough hurlers on staff to cover all of the innings pitched) for the full slate of league games played in that (historic) year, and...

2) amass the highest total WAR values. Both required roster sizes and games played should reflect that particular season's historic averages (e.g., 12-14 men on an early roster, with only a few dozen games played in that season, and 25-man rosters with 154-162 games played in more recent years).

+ *Qualifying player is a Major Leaguer who had at least one season with a positive WAR value (0.1 or better), AND a minimum of 10 plate appearances, or 9 innings pitched, or a Negro Leagues player who had at least one season of 1.0 WAR or better. It seemed necessary to use a higher standard with regard to these players as an offset, for two reasons: NLB stats are notoriously sketchy and incomplete, and thus, can not be relied upon with the same level of confidence as official Major League Baseball stats; and, whether *I* like it or not, I can't retroactively insert every NLB player into MLB history (I wouldn't want to take it that far anyway), but it's my informed opinion that at least the very best NLB players could certainly have performed well as Major Leaguers, and therefore, they belong to this cohort.

[The basic idea under this head of qualifying players is that, especially if you're doing a season simulation using these new criteria, you want to give each team its best (realistic) shot; a negative WAR player would (at least, *theoretically*) saddle his team with a liability, and he should only be added to a roster as a necessary "last resort." Conversely, it's wildly unrealistic to extrapolate the stats for one game to a full season's worth,

so some minimums must be required, and positional integrity and seasonal coverage again have to come into view. But this is why my total pool of players is roughly 12,000, and not roughly 19,000 players (the number who have actually appeared in the Major Leagues to date); if we're gonna speculate at all about which parts of the globe would've produced the best teams in a given season, stretch of years, or era, we need to focus on positive, season-long performances coming together for particular squads. Bottom line: emphasis less on participation, more on summation of performance.]

Wednesday, June 7: Leak/Catch-the-fever-teaser #2

What use(s) you'll have for what's being produced

First, I guess you'll need to know what is being produced:

+ An exclusive register of career WAR values (year by year) for around 12,000 MLB players, grouped by birthplace; in other words, this is the first time (correct me if I'm wrong) where you'll have access to gathered WAR-value data AND birthplace data at your fingertips! In PDF files/e-books and MS Works/Excel spreadsheets (as many versions as I can cover, to meet every potential user's individual needs), you'll have a massive body of such data, fully indexed by player name, birthplace, and Group Grid numbers.[see next point]

+ Five Groups of 30-year "grids" (1. 1871-1900; 2. 1901-1930; 3. 1931-1960; 4. 1961-1990; 5. 1991-2016, with 4 open slots for 2017-2020). The rows (horizontal) contain player's name, birth-place abbreviation, and for each year played (under the applicable year, divided into those 30 columns on each page), either a neutral or positive WAR value ("X" for negative WAR or for not making the minimum 10 PA or 9 IP). Each of these 5 main grid groups is subdivided into regional grids, denoted as, e.g., G5-1, G5-2, G5-3, G5-4, and G5-5 (only the 19th Century grid, covering 1871-1900, is not broken into the smaller chunks; but this is why that comprehensive index of players with grid #s is so handy, and so necessary).

+ So,.....who could make good use of this exclusive stuff?

1. Well, anyone who's merely intrigued by the origins of any of the thousands of players who have made an impact on MLB, or even the top hundred (or so) Negro League players (several of whom played in both spheres, of course).

2. Anyone who'd like to see WAR values laid out, season-by-season, for essentially every average-or-better player in MLB history (remember: every player who had at least one season of 0.1 WAR or better, with applicable minimums for PA and IP). I've made it so easy:

Step 1) consult the player index for the grid(s) in which his data appears; Step 2) consult the player's row, reading across,

in the appropriate columns; Step 3) is up to you; you can assess at a glance his career span and trajectory, and account for years missing in action; or sight up and down that grid page to see just who his teammates would have been in any given year under this system, or who would've been team MVP in that year.

3. Any computer simulation/season-replay gamer and/or researcher can instantly recognize that this opens up a whole new field, a whole new baseball "universe," to use the language of the Stormfront Studios game series (*Old Time Baseball* and the Tony LaRussa series of CD-ROM issues). As a matter of fact, my follow-up project may well be the testing of my speculated results via those aforementioned simulators, *Out Of The Park*, *Strategic Baseball Simulator*, and any others that can be adapted for such use. Then again, what's to stop YOU from proceeding with this, even if I don't pursue it? Have at it, I say! Get in on the fun!

So many possible uses exist, but the main idea is simple: this can provide "mental fun." Enjoy the fruits of this longtime dream project at any level you desire. Keep it sporadic and small, or blow it up big into a sprawling project of your own (hint: this could lend itself to a whole new franchise of fantasy-what if? replay leagues for someone, though I don't see that I'll have the time to develop it; entrepreneurs and/or publishers (web OR print), make your pitch or offer your suggestions here: gb@trutholio.com

Saturday, June 10: Leak/Catch-the-fever-teaser #3

As I'm well along the path of doing the final editing and formatting just before product releases can be made, I'm seeing more value and possible uses of these materials with each work session. Here's one example: I've taken great pains to distinguish between players sharing the same name (or something close enough to be confusing); helpful clues regarding positions, left-handed or right-handed pitchers, nicknames, or era/years played are right there in the name field. [I confess it: I did this primarily for my *own* sake, so *I* could keep these guys straight, especially when drafting players onto rosters in historical simulation environments; it's sure nice to know which Whoever Jones or Oh, *That* Guy Smith you're talking about! And, don't you want to be accurate?]

Another thing that I really haven't focused on so far, but which is nonetheless the key driver for me: the historical-geographical nexus. From the start, I could see how there could well be a gradual but pronounced shift from American East Coast dominance that would move westward (think California(!), but don't forget Illinois and Texas), and then outside of the U.S. (Venezuela and the Dominican Republic, anyone?). I, for one, am fascinated by both the historical and geographical trends, as well as the speculated results of matching birthplace-determined teams against each other -- in past historical settings -- only composed under this new set of rules.

Probably the best over-the-weekend news is that I plan to post some sample spreadsheet pages and results (for example, championship winners in random years) during the next week (June 12-17). Just how much I'll be able to make available in that short span right around the corner will depend largely on what I can still accomplish today, sooooo....back to work for me. Hope we can connect again soon.

{Important note: It was quite soon after this point that I received the news that my father was passing away. I instantly recognized that the time had come for me to move eastward to assist and support my mother, and as a result, all of my ongoing projects would have to be put on hold for several months. This explains the abrupt cessation of the work — without warning — and the necessary gap.}

Monday, October 16: Leak/Catch-the-fever-teaser #4

Believe it or not, I'm on the job, and moving forward with this labor of love. A list of "Declared Champions" under this WAR-based system, where rosters are solely determined by place of birth, has been compiled through the 1913 season. So below is a sneak preview of what's being compiled and organically produced as I make my way towards MLB's 2016 (and 2017?) season. Just from this sampling of the years 1871 through 1913, trends in baseball-playing populations concentrating and moving westward from the eastern seaboard can easily be

seen, much as we might expect. Dominance over several years is also exhibited, but it's coming at times from some possibly unexpected quarters. Remember, there are no New York Yankees or Boston Red Sox or St. Louis Cardinals or NY/SF Giants, etc. in this "league." We're going by birthplace-qualified teams here, using historic MLB *AND* -- where available -- Negro League (Black Baseball) stats accrued in specific years (thank you, seamheads.com!). In other words, Babe Ruth plays for the MD-DC team, as does Jimmie Foxx and Lefty Grove; Willie Mays plays for Alabama, as does Hank Aaron; Oscar Charleston plays for Indiana, alongside Sam Rice, and so forth. Their actual MLB-NLB performances for a given year, captured in the form of a single number (Wins Above Replacement, or WAR), are credited to their home state/regional/national team, instead of their historic MLB/NLB squad.

In effect, we're re-grouping 12,000+ qualifying players by birthplace in an effort to see which areas could put the very best team on the field in a specific season (1871 through 2016, at least; need we mention that we can expect by turn Texas and California, then Venezuela and the Dominican Republic, in recent decades, to dominate? stay tuned!). And in *THIS* system, teams are integrated well in advance of 1947, the way things *SHOULD* have been. I hope you can appreciate that aspect, too.

So this is unique, exciting stuff, baseball fans and number-crunchers! And now, your first sneak preview of results:

1871-1875 -- New York (state) "Excelsiors"

1876 -- Pennsylvania "Premiers"

1877-1879 -- NY Excelsiors

1880 -- PA Premiers

1881-1884 -- NY Excelsiors

1885 -- PA Premiers

1886 -- NY Excelsiors

1887 -- PA Premiers

1888 -- NY Excelsiors (Quite the classic rivalry so far!)

1889 -- Massachusetts ("Bay State Barons(?)"; help with their name solicited: gb@trutholio.com)

****FIRST BREAKTHROUGH FOR NON-NY/PA TEAM****

1890-1892 -- PA Premiers

1893-1895 -- Ohio "Titans" (FIRST NON-ATLANTIC TEAM; STARTING TO MOVE WESTWARD)

1896 -- OH/PA (too close to call; playoff suggested, using *Old Time Baseball* or other season-replay sim/game)

1897-1909 -- PA Premiers (Wagner, Matty, Plank, et al ; just look at that run!)

1910 -- OH Titans

1911-1912 -- PA Premiers

1913 -- OH Titans

Championship tally through 1913:

1. Pennsylvania -- 22.5 (disputed/shared/TBD 1896)
2. New York -- 14 (all in the 19th Century, so champs for that period, with PA second at 11.5)
3. Ohio -- 5.5 (remember 1896 half-title)
4. Massachusetts -- 1

Get what I'm doing? I hope you got a kick out of this first glimpse, and can enjoy -- with me -- whatever else is to follow. Right now, I have to get back to work (I'll be in 1914 to start).

Friday, Nov. 10: Leak/Catch-the-fever-teaser #5

More champions for you (see further below; the list continues here):

- 1914 -- OH Titans
- 1915-1916 -- PA Premiers
- 1917 -- ILLINOIS (nickname TBD; suggestions may be sent here): gb@trutholio.com
- 1918 -- PA Premiers
- 1919 -- OH Titans
- 1920 -- TEXAS (nickname TBD; suggestions may be sent here): gb@trutholio.com
- 1921 -- OH Titans
- 1922 -- Texas
- 1923 -- NY Excelsiors

1924-1925 -- Texas
1926 -- Illinois
1927 -- PA Premiers
1928 -- ALABAMA (nickname TBD; suggestions may
be sent here): gb@trutholio.com
1929 -- PA Premiers
1930 -- Illinois (short season necessary; no full-
season qualifiers for 138+ game schedule)
1931 -- PA Premiers
1932 -- Illinois
1933-1943 -- CALIFORNIA (nickname TBD; suggestions
may be sent here): gb@trutholio.com

(You *knew* that was coming at some point, didn't you? CA dominance was just a matter of time. And 11 in a row won't be the end of their titles, I can guarantee you!)

1944-1945 -- Illinois

This is as far as I've gone to date. I may skip ahead to the 1950's at this point in order to give those much-appreciated guys at seamheads.com a chance to figure out Negro League seasons from 1946 through 1950 (I don't want to have to go back and plug in qualifying NLB players after already declaring (tentative) champions for those years). Remember, we do integration here, as far back as the data will allow.

Championship tally through 1945:

1. Pennsylvania -- 28.5 (disputed/shared/TBD 1896)
2. New York -- 15 (14 of 15 in the 19th Century, so champs for that period, with PA second at 11.5)
3. California -- 11
4. Ohio -- 8.5 (remember 1896 half-title)
5. Illinois -- 6
6. Texas -- 4
- 7t. Alabama, Massachusetts -- 1

***Notes on naming conventions that I follow (for team nicknames):

1. should be a name/term that can be applied to groups of human beings or serve as an identifying rally cry/slogan/ideal, and animal names are ruled out;
2. since uniform colors were widely used to identify baseball squads way back in the day, we'll "grandfather" them through in this project (but none of those in use today will be accepted, to stave off confusion of identities);
3. old-sounding (think 19th Century-type) names are to be preferred, since that's when many of these franchises started out (use that mindset, and don't engage in anachronisms);
4. try to tie in a state's theme, motto, or a claim to fame; hence,

the New York Excelsiors, for example (state motto);

5. homages to past -- but now defunct -- franchises are acceptable, maybe even welcomed (Bay State Pilgrims, perhaps, for the Massachusetts team? Alabama Greys or Monarchs ?);

6. alliteration is preferred (e.g., Penn Premiers), as is internal rhyming (e.g., O-*HI*-o *TI*-tans);

7. keep it upbeat and honorable (who'd want to play for or root for the Hometown Horrifics or the Local Lacklusters ?).

Tuesday, 11/28/17: Leak/Catch-the-fever-teaser #6

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF CHAMPIONS, 1871-1970!

The results of this grand experiment in baseball history perspective are now in for the first 100 years of Major League Baseball (and the entire Negro Leagues era). It's all about titles won, but the concept of "Pennant Points" helps to paint the picture, and here's how that works:

1. Each season's title is worth 100 points (the team with the most cumulative WAR wins)
2. Each qualifying team is rated by the ratio of its own WAR total compared to the winning team's total, expressed as percentage x 100 (rounding up, always a whole number)

3. Pennant Points are accumulated each season in which a state/nation can put a representative team on the field (covering all positions, with enough pitchers)

I trust that's clear enough, but you can always inquire further by e-mailing me: gb@trutholio.com So here we go:

PENNANT POINT TOTALS, 1871 through 1970

1. PENNSYLVANIA "PREMIERS"	6216
2. New York "Excelsiors"	3413
3. California (nickname?)	3358
4. Ohio "Titans"	2698
5. Illinois (nickname?)	2679
6. Texas (nickname?)	1532
7. Massachusetts ("Bay State Pilgrims"?)	925
8. Missouri (nickname?)	315
9. Alabama (nickname?)	308
10. Cuba (nickname?)	234

(also on the board: Indiana, Brooklyn, North Carolina)

THE BOTTOM LINE, SO FAR (with 1971-2017 still to go):

1. CALIFORNIA, 32 titles in 34 qualifying years (QY)
2. Pennsylvania, 31 titles in 74 QY
3. New York, 17 titles in 41 QY
4. Ohio, 8 titles in 34 QY
5. Illinois, 6 titles in 39 QY

6. Texas, 4 titles in 20 QY
7. 1 title each: Massachusetts (1889) and Alabama (1928)

Notes and preview of what's ahead (1971-2017):

1. Beginning in 1971, California split into two, CA-South and CA-North (CAS & CAN in the spreadsheet grids, which I plan to make available as just *one* product when this project is completed; target date is end of 2017).

2. I can already tell you that BOTH CA teams flourished in 1971 & 1972, so don't think we're being unfair to the state of California in making this division (rationale: CA has lapped the field in MLB players produced, so TWO teams' worth of players can be assembled {*nearly*} continually from 1971 on, *AND* I suspect that Californians themselves -- especially those competing for MLB jobs -- would welcome this move).

3. So don't cry for California, but watch out for Florida, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, and of course, the Dominican Republic, to emerge as viable contenders and dominating squads in the seasons ahead.

Back to the grindstone for me. Until next time, take care...

12/14/17: Leak/Catch-the-fever-teasers #7 and #8

(#7) 120 YEARS OF CHAMPIONS, 1871-1990! (27 to go)

When I first told my father about the birthplace-based project I envisioned roughly 20 years ago -- the one I hope to wrap up soon, the results of which I've been presenting to you here -- he said matter-of-factly, and without hesitation, "Well, California would win that." Of course, going by sheer numbers of CA-born MLB players since the early 20th Century, that's almost a foregone conclusion. But Dad didn't see any of the birthplace data. It wasn't readily available, if it was even compiled in one place somewhere, until Baseball-Reference.com came along and put it out there for us. No, Dad just sensed it, and I'm now seeing just how right he was.

The surprising part -- to me, anyway -- is the total domination California would have enjoyed, beginning in 1954, and until at least 1990. At the time of this report, even though CA was split into TWO teams from 1971 on -- CA-South (the flagship franchise) and CA-North (going by generally-accepted dividing lines, per Wikipedia and US Govt. regional definitions) -- CA/CA-S won a stunning 37 titles in succession! Only twice did a non-CA squad get close: OHIO, in 1971, the first year of the split (BTW, CA-North finished third that year), and ILLINOIS, in 1980, when only a whisker separated the winner from the runner-up. But otherwise ... everybody was merely playing for second place, year in and year out. So the list of winners from 1971 through 1990 would include *only* CALIFORNIA.

I guess the only "news" that can be a part of this report is that FLORIDA and the DOMINICAN REPUBLIC have started to show up as qualifying teams. They're both filling all of the positions and getting enough innings pitched from 8-10 pitchers. Both debuted as qualifiers in 1984, and as we move closer to 2017, I'd be surprised if one or the other doesn't finally snap the CA win streak. Make that *real* surprised, when I scan down the lists of players born in the Dominican, especially, who will be available to fill rosters from 1991 through 2017. So stay tuned. But if the results so far don't put any spark into your step, (I was born in Wisconsin, so *I've* never had any realistic hopes for *my* team winning a title; yet, I still find this whole thing fascinating, and maybe you can, too), there's some good/easier-to-take news coming:

(#8) 8a: PENNSYLVANIA still leads in the Pennant Points derby (6620), having racked those up in 81 Qualifying Years from 1871-1990 (81 out of 120). Also, PA only needs to have one more QY to guarantee the top number in that category; even if CA reels off 27 more of those (all that's left), it'll end up with 81. So there's something for *Pennsylvanians* to grab onto, at any rate.

8b: But the good news in general is this: when this "True Test League" project has been completed (the strictest rules governing qualifying rosters), we're gonna throw it open to co-ops (*i.e.*, 2 or 3 states sharing borders) and far-reaching regions (*e.g.*, American plains/western states and even interna-

tional combinations). In "phase 2," the emphasis will be on maximum participation, where players who had great years aren't so often left out -- with no team to play for -- because of a mere lack of teammates. The upshots of this new branch of the system:

1) the states/nations that can stand alone in most years will continue to go it alone; the less-populous areas of the U.S. and the globe will be combined in ways that make sense geographically, even if not politically; and until they, too, can stand on their own;

2) many more star players will get onto qualifying squads and have noticeable impact on the standings;

3) but when the regional scope expands, the bragging rights will be diluted, as they will now be shared with a larger area (kinda takes the fun out of it when less of a local thing and doesn't "prove" as much);

4) we'll be better able to gauge how much sheer population in general (not how many men make it to the Major Leagues from the total population) has to do with winning titles in this birthplace-based system; the size of the respective total populations feeding the rosters will be more uniform, and that disparity will be reduced;

5) well, we'll see, won't we?; probably something that I'm not thinking of at the moment; part of the fun!

Until next time, I'm your reporter for Global Baseball 2017.

1/1/18: Leak/Catch-the-fever-teaser #9 (and #1 of 2018)

Breakthrough! The Dominican Republic finally snapped the California winning streak in 2006. The CA-born squads had strung together an incredible 52 titles in a row, but the Dominican-born teams won in both 2006 and 2007 (with CA-South still finishing a very close second in both years). Also putting together qualifying rosters in the first 7 years of the 21st Century (I've yet to do 2008 through 2017) were Ohio, Florida, Georgia, and Venezuela. The Venezuela-born teams mounted strong challenges in both 2004 and 2006, and they appear to have exceptional potential the rest of the way.

But over the long haul, the *Pennsylvanians* have clinched the top spot in the *Qualifying Years* category, having put together 82 of those for the time period of 1871 through 2007 (again, with 10 seasons yet to go). Assuming that CA-South qualifies each year from 2008 through 2017, they'll fall just one QY short (note: CA qualified for the first time in 1933, and in only 4 years since did they *not* qualify). Bottom line for the True Test League results: the California-born players take the cake: 7,054 Pennant Points (see below for brief explanation) and 67 championships through 2007. For some perspective, the Premiers of Pennsylvania are a distant second with 6,659 Pennant Points and 31 titles, spread out over 137 seasons. So yes, I'd

say that California not only has produced the most MLB players to date, but the best as well. Yep, Dad was right.

Remember, though, that the tide has turned in recent seasons: the Latin-Americans are clearly in the vanguard and it now is a *global* game. Personally, I'm itching to get to those remaining ten years of the TTL and to get on to the Regional/Co-Op phase of this longtime dream project in AD 2018. A cross-eras Time Travel Tournament -- using the Time Machine feature of my favorite baseball replay/simulation, *Old Time Baseball* -- is in the works, too. I'll explain this concept and the plan as we go forward. If you stay tuned, I'll keep you posted. Deal?

1/24/18: MAJOR DECADES-LONG GOAL REACHED

3 Items in the news here -- (skip to #3 if you just want the results from 2008 through 2017)

1. The Saga in Brief

Way back at the end of the 20th Century, I started on this dream project, and now the initial, major goal has been reached. I can now tell you which areas of the country (and recently, the globe) would have been able to put the best strictly birthplace-based teams on the field in every MLB season from 1871 through 2017. The premises are simple: the location of a player's *birth* solely determines the team for which he plays

throughout his career (no trades, no free agency, just life-long local loyalty); **WAR** values (**Wins Above Replacement**) that reflect each player's actual historical (MLB, and in some cases, *Negro League* Baseball) performance in a given year are totaled up for the *core* roster (adequately covering all defensive positions, game-day availability, and innings pitched for a full season); this yields a team total, and best team total WAR wins that year's championship/title. Straightforward enough, right? But the work was painstaking and tedious, and now I can breathe a sigh of relief. The original goal has been achieved, and I'm anxious to get the results out to anyone who is interested. However...

Fortunately for you, I'll be able to drop the fruits of my labor in your lap (electronically, and/or in printed materials) within a few months (God willing). But in between now and the final-release date(s), I've got back-checking, verification, and polishing to do, and that means more long hours of tedious detail work; *necessary* detail work, because I want to get it all right. A big part of telling the truth is precision in the details, and even though this is all *retro-speculation*, I want to be making educated and plausible guesses at what might have been. So that'll be my priority in coming weeks.

2. In the Pipeline

After all of the *True Test League* (original project) results have been verified, the Regional/Co-Op League is next up. The

same premises and rules will be applied as in the TTL, but this time around, only the years from 1901 on will be re-examined (no 19th Century replays, since regions would make little sense in that context; too far-flung). And I say, "re-examined" because the stand-alone state qualifiers would retain their TTL rosters and WAR totals. The idea in this Phase 2 run-through is to see if any regional/co-op team could overcome the TTL champion in any season (1901-2017). Additionally, more players will get involved in the reckoning, and from more areas of the globe; this is a wide-participation model, as opposed to the more restrictive, high-bar league that was the True Test.

One more difference: since many TTL aggregations fell short of qualifying by only a position player or pitcher or two -- and otherwise might have formed a contending team -- I'll be plugging such gaps with a negative WAR value for "Anonymous Alabama Pitcher" or "Anonymous Indiana Shortstop" etc., in order to complete the core roster where needed. *{I've decided to NOT introduce this new wrinkle, even though there have been several instances where what might have been a solid, contending team lacked only a second catcher or some game appearances at shortstop, for just two examples. The main reason is that the waters would be muddied and project vision would be compromised if that "crutch" was used. Plausibility would take a hit, so that's a "no-go zone." However, the rest of the concept/explanation has been left here in the original context, so you can take it for*

what it's worth.} That WAR value might be -1.5 or -2.0 or more, depending upon the position, with respect to the "defensive spectrum." In other words, you can have your locally-born no-name sub-MLB player at shortstop, but it's gonna cost you more than a locally-born no-name sub-MLB first baseman! We want to see the locals field a team (even if only as part of a region or co-op), but we want to be realistic, too. As I see it, this approach is pretty fair and sensible. *{Last word on this aspect: I continued to find plenty of participating regional teams, so that confirmed to me that this was an unnecessary "tweak" after all; we could live without it in a contented state.}*

3. TTL Champions, 2008-2017 (and tentative overall summary, subject to verification)

2008 & 2009 -- California-South
2010 -- Dominican Republic
2011 -- California-South
2012 & 2013 -- Dominican Republic
2014 & 2015 -- FLORIDA
2016 -- Dominican Republic
2017 -- Florida (reigning champs, if you will)

Total Titles Won:

- 1. CA/CA-South -- 70**
- 2. Pennsylvania -- 31 (most Qualifying Years, 82)**

3. New York -- 17
4. Ohio -- 8
5. Dominican Republic and Illinois -- tied, 6 each
7. Texas -- 4
8. Florida -- 3
9. Alabama and Massachusetts -- tied, 1 each

NOTE: Pennant Points wrap-up to follow in weeks ahead

1/27/18: A good article; I agree with this perspective (Hall of Fame voting) {link to web article}. One quote:

"The arguments in favor of the cheaters are tired and weak."

I'm against cheaters of *all* stripes; never reward bad behavior!

1/29/18: A follow-up to the article linked to below (he beat me to it, but I was thinking the same thing re: a certain angles-working scofflaw): Teflon man {link to critique of *Alex Rodriguez* }

3/30/18: Coming (fairly?) soon, a Trutholio spin-off from this page: RETROPLAY.NET! This will be the ultimate destination and showcase for the progress and results of my decades-spanning birthplace-based baseball project ("*retro-specumetrics* "). For what I've been up to in the last few years,

get caught up by reading this page, from the bottom up. *{No need to do that, since this recap has everything in order!}*

But on the other hand, if you *have* been checking in here from time to time, you might be saying, "Well, it's about time! *Finally*, we're gonna get something new and complete!" Right now, we're not far off from that, so watch for an incremental roll-out of this one-topic site, beginning in April.

[Hint to loyal followers, baseball replay enthusiasts, and sabermetricians : the plan is to post and offer for FREE -- in the beginning only -- all associated project tools (30-year WAR grids covering the careers of 12,000+ MLB/Negro League Baseball players; subset sorts from master spreadsheets; methodology details+) *AND* the results, of course. However, down the road a bit, it might be time to "pass the hat" and/or publish all of this for actual remuneration (*e.g.*, shopping cart system. I do recognize that most people would like to see some tangible return for the thousands of hours of often *tedious*, painstaking data-entry labor put into a massive project like this; I'm no exception!). So that's FYI. The message, again: get it while it's still free, and spread the word to your friends. This material is unique and expansive ; a whole new "what if?" perspective will unfold before your eyes!]

4/21/18: Within 3 days -- by sometime on Tuesday, April 24 -- I hope to start rolling out my spin-off site, *Retroplay.net*. Much of the framework is in place, and I'm uploading more content

daily that is intended for publication to the web next week. I'm anxious to return to determining the results of the *second* league (the regional one that involves many more players than the True Test League), but I also wanted to give you plenty to peruse, sift, and digest on the new pages in the meantime. The URL will be furnished here and on the Trutholio Home page as soon as everything is officially set. NOTE also: when *Global Baseball 2018* moves to Retroplay, the "G" in the acronym, "H-E-L-P-I-N-G" will stand for something new. Two possibilities in the running are "Gallery" or "Graphics"-- where those picture & quote combo graphics may be re-posted, with new combos added -- or simply, "Gist" -- which could serve as a summary page of sorts, detailing in brief what the Trutholio stance is on a number of issues, large, small, or just matters of curiosity. If you have a suggestion re: new use of the old page space, you can email me here: gb@trutholio.com.

All for now. Check back soon and often.

4/27/18: We're one close step away from putting Retroplay.net on the web where you should be able to find it. Right now, what will ultimately be published at www.retroplay.net IS available at:

<http://luke2132.angelfire.com/retroplay/> or...

<http://luke2132.angelfire.com/retroplay/index.html>

So a preview is immediately available by pointing your browser to one or the other. "Humor" tip: because I couldn't figure out how to remove the two kids waving at the bottom of each of the 7 pages, I decided to go with a running gag that proceeds from the Home page through to the last page (click on the tabs and shoot to the bottom).

More info will be posted on all of this as we go.

4/28/18: 2 things: It appears we're in business at both www.trutholio.com and www.retroplay.net. Since this is such good news, and I do want to thank the many *good* people at Lycos and Angelfire who have made this happen, I'll be removing the references to the un-requested "editing help" I kept getting from somebody (*not* cut from the same cloth, apparently) on staff at one or the other. Secondly, if the "hands off" trend continues, I'll even tuck the material that kept getting deleted out of sight, by putting all of that into a downloadable PDF (it will no longer be out in plain view on the Home page, but it will remain accessible to those who wish to view it). This is an olive branch I'm extending in good faith and in hopes that we're done with the distrust and hard feelings. I'm looking forward to less politics and more baseball! I'll meet you there: www.retroplay.net

{NOT included here in this recap was a 5/8/18 mini-diatribе concerning the constant attacks I'd been enduring at my Trutholio site, courtesy of an inside saboteur at Lycos or Angelfire. But that was what motivated me to seek out a better web hosting service, and that turned out to be WordPress.com. **Happy** to be there: **seaporter1.com**}

5/18/18 -- Heads-up: sometime fairly soon -- *hopefully* -- this page will be transitioned into a "Gist" page that will serve as a summary of the Trutholio positions and depository of charts and graphics. The baseball stuff will be moving to **www.retroplay.net**, and it will be mirrored at seaporter1.com. However, if you want to save the material posted here, it would be a good idea to do so soon, before a PDF version or two will be all that's available (via links). **{Like this!}**

{Now you've got the whole story of the *Global Baseball* page, the project behind it, and how it's all led to Retroplay.net. — 6/19/18}