

Fall 1994

Shoeless Joe Jackson Times

The good lord will know I'm innocent. Goodbye, good buddy. This is it.
- Joe Jackson's last words



Drawing by Blair Jenson, Culture House

News From the Editor

Welcome to the 1994 Summer issue of the Shoeless Joe Jackson Times. In this issue you will find the continuation of Jackson's complete grand jury testimony, the usual trivia section, my memories from visiting the Baseball Hall of Fame, and your letters printed with a reply. I welcome questions, comments, arguments, suggestions, or just a note about the weather. So if you have something to say or if you know anyone that would like to receive this newsletter, just mail in the last page, or if you have access to the Internet, you can send E-Mail to me at this address - dakrame1@facstaff.wisc.edu - I want to thank everyone who wrote in and I hope you enjoy this issue of the *Shoeless Joe Jackson Times*.

TAK

My Memories of the Baseball Hall of Fame

A few years back I had a chance to visit the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, NY. Walking up to it I was awed by its magical feeling of history and legends. It is a shrine, built to the men who played the game with all their soul. However, it is not a court of law, and it does not possess some special power to judge a man for actions off the field. It is a place to judge a man's accomplishments on the field, that is what it was built for, that is its purpose. My fond



Joe Jackson's shoes displayed in the Hall of Fame

memories of this place are overshadowed by the tragedy that the man that was denied the one thing he loved to do most in this world, play ball, is not in the Hall of Greatness to take his rightful place among the best there ever were.

I remember walking through the Hall reading the plaques of the greatest men to ever play the game. But one is missing. I search and search, but Joe Jackson was not to be found in the Hall of Legends. I continued my search. At last I found him. Tucked away, along a wall, were Shoeless Joe Jackson's shoes. I stare in disbelief at the scene in front of me. Could it be that the only tribute to one of the greatest players of all time, called Shoeless Joe, were his shoes? Certainly this could not be all.

I continued my search, hoping to find him elsewhere. I glance up at a scoreboard which displays the highest lifetime batting averages. He is listed 3rd. Now, I am confused. They openly

display that he has the third highest lifetime batting average of all time, and yet they apparently deem his achievements unworthy of the Hall. Perhaps they were not aware of his glove, called 'the place where triples go to die,' or maybe his power, or his speed.

I continued my search. I wandered into the library, where they keep records, clippings and essays about the great players. I ask if there is a file on Joe Jackson. Of course, they say. I page through it. There are articles and stats which clearly show the great

player that he was. Surely the Hall must have read there own file. Finally, I come to the conclusion that the Hall did not base their decision on Jackson's achievements and greatness on the field, as they should have, but to scandalous lies and the blind sweeping hand of one man's "justice."



BATting AVERAGE	
ALL TIME	
COBB	.367
HORNSBY	.358
J. JACKSON	.356
BROWNING	.355

Display in the Hall listing the Highest Carrer Batting Averages

I wander back into the Hall to a place where they have a display on the 1919 scandal. They talk about Landis and how the players are banned for life. I rush back downstairs to the library. I look at the file and find Jackson's obituary. The Hall must know he has passed away. Does a lifetime suspension last more than a lifetime I wonder? Even if believe he was guilty, was his crime worse than a murderer's? Does a murderer continue to suffer after his death?

These questions and many more seem to fall on deaf ears; baseball seems to have simply trampled eight men and told the rest of the world not to ever speak of it again. Perhaps one day baseball will show the courage to hear about it's darkest hour, and the wrongs it has done. Perhaps, one day baseball will show the humility to admit its wrongs. Perhaps, one day justice will be served.

As my visit to the Hall of Fame is finished, and I walk out the front gate, I remember turning to the Hall and saying, "If you are waiting for Jackson to finish paying his debt to baseball, you've got it backwards; baseball owes Jackson a debt deeper than any other, and it can only be paid off here, in Cooperstown."

Jackson's Complete Grand Jury Testimony Part 2 of 3

The following is the testimony Joe Jackson gave before the grand jury on September 28, 1920.

Q — Who did Gandil pal with mostly on the team?

A — *Risberg*

Q — Who did McMullin pal with mostly on the team?

A — *I cannot recall who McMullin roomed with*

Q — Who did he go with?

A — *You would see him and Charlie together, and Chick, quite a bit*

Q — Chick Gandil and Charlie Risberg?

A — *All times, not only on this occasion*

Q — Do you know who was the first man that the gamblers approached, that Burns and Attel approached on your team?

A — *Well, I don't know who the first man was.*

Q — Who do you think was the man they approached?

A — *Why, Gandil.*

Q — What makes you think Gandil?

A — *Well, he was the whole works of it, the instigator of it, the fellow that mentioned it to me. He told me that I could take it or let it go, they were going through with it.*

Q — Didn't you think it was the right thing for you to go and tell Comiskey about it?

A — *I did tell them once, "I am not going to be in it." I will just get out of that altogether.*

Q — Who did you tell that to?

A — *Chick Gandil.*

Q — What did he say?

A — *He said I was into it already and I might as well stay in. I said, "I can go to the boss and have every damn one of you pulled out of the limelight." He said it wouldn't be well*

for me if I did that.

Q — Gandil said to you?

A — *Yes, sir.*

Q — What did you say?

A — *Well, I told him any time they wanted to have me knocked off, to have me knocked off.*

Q — What did he say?

A — *Just laughed.*

Q — When did that conversation take place, that you said any time they wanted to have you knocked off, to have you knocked off?

A — *That was the fourth game, the fifth night going back to Cincinnati. I met Chick Gandil and his wife going to the 12th Street Station. They got out of the cab there. I was standing on the corner.*

Q — Do you recall the fourth game that Cicotte pitched?

A — *Yes, sir.*

Q — Did you see any fake plays made by yourself or anybody on that game, that would help throw the game?

A — *Only the wildness of Cicotte.*

Q — What was that?

A — *Hitting the batter, that is the only thing that told me they were going through with it.*

Q — Did you make any intentional errors yourself that day?

A — *No, sir, not during the whole series.*

Q — Did you bat to win?

A — *Yes.*

Q — And run the bases to win?

A — *Yes, sir.*

Q — And fielded the balls at the outfield to win?

A — *I did.*

Q — Did you ever hear anyone accusing Cicotte of crossing the signals that were given to

him by Schalk.

A — *No, sir, I did not.*

Q — Do you know whether or not any of those signals were crossed by Cicotte?

A — *No, sir, I couldn't say.*

Q — But you didn't hear any of the boys talking about that, did you?

A — *No.*

Q — After the fourth game you went to Cincinnati and you had the \$5,000, is that right?

A — *Yes, sir.*

Q — Where did you put the \$5,000, did you put it in the bank or keep it on you person?

A — *I put it in my pocket.*

Q — What denominations, in silver or bills?

A — *In bills.*

Q — How big were some of the bills?

A — *Some hundreds, mostly fifties.*

Q — What did Mrs. Jackson say about it after she found it out again?

A — *She felt awful bad about it, cried about it a while.*

Q — Did it ever occur to you to tell about this before this?

A — *Yes, where I offered to come here last fall in the investigation, I would have told it last fall if they would have brought me in.*

Q — And you are telling this now, of course, of your own free will, you want to tell the truth, is that the idea, of all you know?

A — *Yes, sir.*

Q — In the second game, did you see any plays made by any of those fellows that would lead you to believe that they were trying to throw the game, that is the game that Claude Williams pitched with Cincinnati?

A — *There was wildness, too, that cost that game. Two walks, I think, and a triple by this fellow, two or three men out.*

Q — Was there any other moves that would lead you to believe they were throwing the game?

A — *No, sir, I didn't see any plays that I thought was throwing the game.*

Q — In the third game Kerr pitched there, 1 to nothing. Did you see anything there that would lead you to believe anyone was trying to throw the game?

A — *No, sir. I think if you would look that record up, I drove in two and hit one.*

Q — You made a home run, didn't you?

A — *That was in the last game here.*

Q — The fourth game Cicotte pitched again? It was played out here in Chicago and Chicago lost it 2 to nothing? Do you remember that?

A — *Yes, sir.*

Q — Did you see anything wrong about that game that would lead you to believe there was an intentional fixing?

A — *The only thing that I was sore about that game, the throw I made to the plate. Cicotte tried to intercept it.*

Q — It would have gone to the first base if he had not intercepted it?

A — *Yes.*

Q — Did you do anything to throw these games?

A — *No, sir.*

Q — Any game in the series?

A — *Not a one. I didn't have an error or make no misplay.*

Q — Supposing the White Sox would have won this Series, the World's Series, what would you have done then with the \$5,000?

A — *I guess I would have kept it, that was all I could do. I tried to win all the time.*

Q — To keep on with these games, the fifth game, did you see anything wrong with that or any of the games, did you see any plays that you would say might have been made to throw that particular game?

A — *Well, I only saw one play in the whole series, I don't remember what game it was in, either, it was in Cincinnati.*

Q — Who made it?

A — *Charlie Risberg.*

Q — What was that?

A — *It looked like a perfect double play. And he only gets one, gets the ball and runs over to the bag with it in place of throwing it in front of the bag.*

Q — After the series were all over, did you have any talk with any of these men?

A — *No, sir, I left the next night.*

Q — Where did you go?

A — *Savannah, Georgia.*

Q — Weren't you very much peeved that you only got \$5,000 and you expected to get twenty?

A — *No, I was ashamed of myself.*

Q — Have you ever talked with Chick Gandi since that time?

A — *No, I never saw him since.*

Trivia

1) Who said "Say it ain't so Joe?"

2) Name the four movies/shows that are related to Shoeless Joe.

3) Who said, "I copied Jackson's style because I thought he was the greatest hitter I had ever seen?"

Answers on page 7

Q — When was the last time you saw him and talked to him?

A — *It was on the following morning after the series were over, that day in Comiskey's office, waiting in there.*

Q — What did you say to him at that time?

A — *I told him there was a hell of a lot of scandal going around for what had happened. He said, "To hell with it." He was about half drunk. I went on out and left that night.*

Q — Was Chick Gandil in the habit of drinking?

A — *Yes, Chick like his liquor?*

Q — Did you drink much, Mr. Jackson?

A — *Now and then, i don't make no regular practice of it.*

Q — Do you get drunk?

A — *No, sir.*

Q — Have you been drunk since you have been with the Chicago White Sox team?

A — *Yes, sir.*

Q — During the playing season?

A — *Yes, sir.*

Q — Where?

A — *Atlantic City.*

Q — You were not playing -

A — *Off days.*

Q — Did Mr. Comiskey or Mr. Gleason know you were drunk at that time?

A — *I don't judge they did, no, sir.*

Q — Who was with you when you got drunk?

A — *Claude Williams, John Fornier, and myself.*

Q — That is some years ago, he played with the Chicago team, is that right?

A — *I think it was '18.*

Q — You haven't been drunk since you played with the Chicago team?

A — *Not what you would call drunk, no.*

Q — Did you ever talk to Happy Felsch since that time, about those games?

A — *I believe I mentioned it to Happy the other day, too; Yes, I know I did.*

Q — What did you say to him?

A — *I told him they would have him down before the Grand Jury before long, the way things looked.*

Q — What did he say?

A — *He said, "All right."*

Q — What day was that, Mr. Jackson?

A — *I don't remember what day it was, but one day last week.*

Q — Were you playing ball?

A — *We were walking across the field, yes, sir. Just before practice, I believe, and we were taking our position for practice that day.*

Q — Do you know whether or not Happy Felsch received some of this money?

A — *I don't know that he received any more than what the boys said.*

Q — What did the boys say about him?

A — *They said each fellow got so much money.*

Q — Did they say how much?

A — *\$5,000, I understand, Felsch.*

Q — Do you remember whether or not some of them got more than \$5,000?

A — *No, sir, I don't.*

Q — You wouldn't say that any one got more than \$5,000; in other words, if I was to tell you one man got \$10,000, you wouldn't doubt it, would you; you don't know?

A — *Yes, I know the man you would refer to.*

Q — Do you know how much he got?

A — *I know what he said.*

Q — Do you know how much he said he got?

A — *\$10,000.*

Q — Who do you think I mean, then?

A — *Eddie Cicotte.*

Q — When did Eddie Cicotte tell you he got \$10,000?

A — *The next morning after the meeting we had in his room.*

Q — Did you tell him how much you got?

A — *I did.*

Q — What did you tell him?

A — *I told him I got five thousand.*

Q — What did he say?

A — *He said I was a God damn fool for not getting it in my hand like he did.*

Q — What did he mean by that?

A — *I don't know, that he wouldn't trust anybody, I guess.*

Q — What did he mean, that's what he meant by it?

A — *Why, he meant he would not trust them, they had to pay him before he did anything.*

Q — He meant then you ought to have got your money before you played, is that it?

A — *Yes, that's it.*

Q — Did you have a talk with any of the other players about how much they got?

A — *I understand McMullin got five and Risberg five thousand, that's the way I understand.*

Q — How do you understand that?

A — *Just by talking to different fellows.*

Q — To whom?

A — *Different fellows.*

Q — Did you talk to McMullin himself?

A — *Very little. I never talked to Mac any more than just hello and go on.*

Q — Did you ever ask him how much he got?

A — *Yes.*

Q — What did he say?

A — *Never made me any answer, walked right out.*

Q — Did you ever ask Charlie how much he got?

A — *Yes.*

Q — What did he say?

A — *Asked me how much I got.*

Q — What did you tell him?

A — *Told him.*

Q — What did you tell him?

A — *I told him I got \$5,000.*

Q — What did he say?

A — *He said, "I guess that's all I got."*

Q — Did you believe him at the time?

A — *No, sir, I think he was telling a damn lie.*

Q — What?

A — *I think he was lying.*

Q — Did you tell him at the time he said it he was lying?

A — *Yes.*

Q — You thought he was lying even at that time, did you?

A — *Yes, sir.*

Q — When was that time?

A — *That was this spring. We were talking in Memphis, he and I were taking a walk.*

Q — On your training trip?

A — *Yes, sir.*

Q — Did you ever talk to anybody else about how much they got?

A — *No sir, I didn't.*

Q — You never asked Williams how much he got?

A — *Williams I have, yes?*

Q — What did he say?

A — *He said he got \$5,000 at that time.*

Q — You think he gave you the truth?

A — *No, sir, I do not.*

Q — What do you say?

A — *No, I do not.*

Q — What do you think?

A — *I think that those fellers cut it up to suit themselves, what little they did have.*

Q — Who is this?

A — *This gang.*

Q — What gang?

A — *Charlie.*

Trivia Answers

1) Nobody. Charlie Owens of the Chicago Daily made the story up.

2) Damn Yankees, Field of Dreams, The Natural, and Eight Men Out.

3) Babe Ruth.

Questions on page 5

The final segment of Jackson's grand jury testimony will appear in the next issue.

The Readers Write

This is the section where the Readers write in with questions or comments, and I respond.

I am interested in what drives you to devote a newsletter to Joe Jackson? With regard to his being the greatest player of all time, he was certainly an all time great. But my vote has always gone to the Babe. Aside from his obvious offensive talents, he was regarded as the premier left-handed pitcher of his time with 94 victories in his 1st 5 years. He was also reputed to be an excellent baserunner who understood the game, not just the Sultan of Swat.

Randy Cole

What drives me to write a newsletter about Joe Jackson is that an injustice has been done to him that only public opinion and media pressure can reverse. If there is enough interest, baseball will have to look back and make right what it has done wrong. With regard to who is the greatest, we could argue for hours so I will only say this: The Babe copied Joe's swing.

Thank you for the copy of the second issue of the Shoeless Joe Jackson Times. I am looking forward to publication of the 3rd issue and the continuation of Jackson's testimony before the grand jury. I have not come across this anywhere before and find it fascinating. Keep the Times coming.

Gratefully,
Nancy Otto

Thank you for your letter. I hope you enjoy this issue even more.

I agree with you that Shoeless Joe was one of the greatest players of all time. In fact, my dog (a Pembroke Welsh Corgi) is named Shoeless Joe. I believe he will be inducted into the Hall of Fame

one day, since there is evidence to prove his innocence. Just a country boy caught up in the gambling scene. He needs more respect and the decency of some records in the books!

-Ursula

Thanks for writing. Yes, Joe Jackson is one of, or perhaps the greatest player, of all time. That is why he belongs in the Hall of Fame. I too hope to see the day when justice is handed to Jackson and he takes his place in Cooperstown. Perhaps with enough public interest that day will be soon.

Dear Reader's Write,

The Shoeless Joe Jackson Times is a wonderful example of real baseball. Baseball is the experience of baseball, reinvented daily by boys and girls, fathers and mothers, coaches and players, statisticians and historians, and all who experience baseball. It lives in our memories, and in our future, in mythology and legend, in movies and books, both fiction and nonfiction.

Baseball is not about player strikes, owner lockouts, salary caps, arbitration, or million dollar salaries. The events about to occur in Major League Baseball are irrelevant. Baseball is about, "Build it, and he will come." Thanks to the SJJ Times for being true to The Game.

Kevin

Thank you for your wonderful letter and compliments. Baseball should be about fathers and sons playing catch in the back yard and hopefully it will stay that way forever.



