



Chicago Chapter

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Welcome to the Society of American Baseball Research, E-mail Rothe Chicago Chapter newsletter. This newsletter will be published on the months when there are no meetings. This hopefully will be able to keep everyone informed on the goings on in the chapter.

In this newsletter we will also attempt to give everyone a flavor of some of the research being done by Chicago Chapter members.

If you would like to have a research article published in the newsletter please e-mail it to

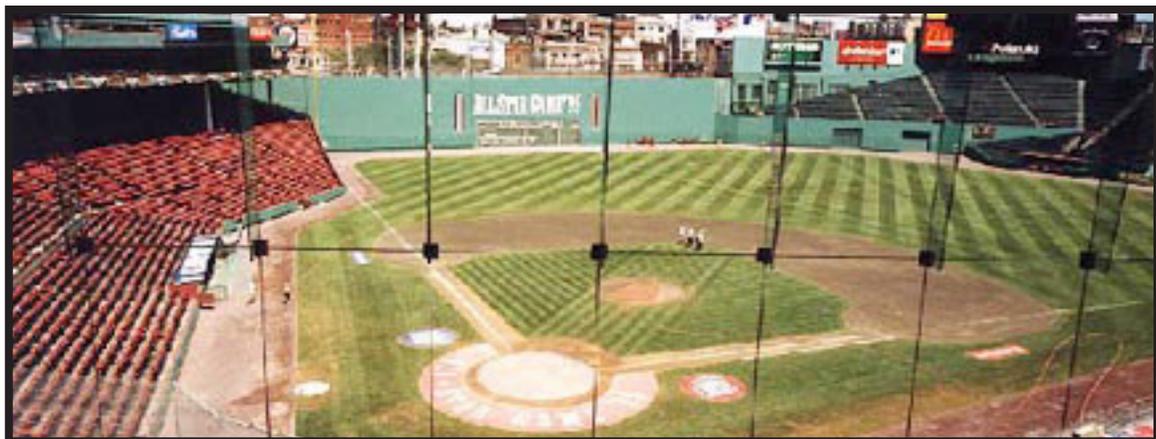
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NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting is on Saturday, January 6th, 2007 at the Roden Branch Library at 6083 N. Northwest Highway, Chicago Illinois, from 1-4 p.m..

Our guest speakers will be,
Brian E. Cooper who wrote, "Red Faber" A biography of the Hall of Fame Spitball Pitcher.

Charles N. Billington who wrote "Wrigley Field's Last World Series: The Wartime Chicago Cubs and the Pennant of 1945."
Following, there will be a short members meeting.



Fenway Park By: Merle A. Branner 1999 ©

Research Article: Baseball in Kane County: Before There Were Cougars

By David Malamut

The Cougars came to Geneva in 1991, but that wasn't the beginning of baseball in Kane County. There were local town teams going all the way back to the mid 1870's. Almost all of the Fox Valley towns had local teams. The best regarded was the 1875 Elgin team who had a player named Charles Comiskey, the Comiskey who would later found the Chicago White Sox at the start of the twentieth century.

The first professional team in Aurora played in 1980 as a member of the Illinois-Iowa

Our last meeting

Saturday, November 18th,
2006

Loyola University

Our guest speaker was John Kling, the grandson of former Cub catcher Johnny Kling. He spoke about the book written about his grandfather "Johnny Kling" by Gil Bogen. He also spoke about the "myths" about why his grandfather wasn't in the hall of fame.

Then the discussion began about chapter business. We decided so far, that meeting on Saturdays would be the best, and that moving the meeting around town shall continue for awhile.

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League. They played from 1890-1892. In 1890 they finished in fifth place. The team would follow on June 16, 1891 with an 11-27 record. The Aurora Hoodoos, which came into existence after the Peoria Canaries moved to the area on May 31, 1892 took their place. The only problem was they would disband with an overall record of 26-27.

The most important game was on April 20th, 1891 when the Chicago White Stockings (Cubs) would play the Aurora team and lose to them 4-3.

Not until 1910 would professional baseball creep back into the Fox Valley. The Aurora Islanders played in the Wisconsin-Illinois League. Unfortunately, they would end up that season in last place with a record of 43-81 record, 33 and a half games out of first place. That same year, Elgin had a team nicknamed the Kittens in the

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Safeco Field By: Merle A. Branner 2006 ©

Area Baseball Happenings

- SABR-Milwaukee is having a special meeting on February 3rd, 2007 at Long Wong's Sports Bar in Milwaukee. At the meeting they are showing Game 7 of the 1957 World Series.
- The Kane County Cougars will be having their annual winter banquet on February 2nd, 2007. The dinner starts at 5:30, with events beginning at 7. This year's keynote speaker is former 1st baseman and current ESPN commentator John Kruk. The place is still to be announced. Tickets will be \$55.00. Also last year MVP of the Cougars, Jeff Baisley and the manager, Aaron Nieckula will speak also. The Cougars are the class "A" affiliate of the Oakland Athletics.

**2007 National
SABR Convention
will be at the
Adam's Mark Hotel
in downtown
St. Louis from
July 26-29.**

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Northern Association. The team would finish in first place with a 37-20 record. The Kittens disbanded on July 11, eight days before the league disbanded. Fritz Maisel led the league in runs with 49. John Hopkins led the league in home runs with seven. One of the highlights of that year was a no-hitter thrown by a pitcher by the name of Boothy against Freeport in which the Kittens won the game 7-2. Another no-hitter was thrown by a pitcher by the name of Wilson on May 30th against Freeport, again this time the Kittens won 3-0.

The Aurora Blues came into existence in 1911 in the Wisconsin-Illinois League. They had a star center fielder by the name of Casey Stengel who led the league in hitting with a .352 average and in hits with 148. The Blues would finish seventh out of eight teams with a 55-67 record, 20 games behind Rockford. Season highlights were a no-hitter by LG Daniels on May 18, and another no-hitter, this time by a pitcher by the name of Padden, both against Green Bay.

In the 1912 season the Blues finished next to last again, this time with a 54-80 record. In 1915 both and Aurora had teams in the Bi-State League. That would be the last of professional baseball in Kane County for over 70 years.

Later in 1985 a proposal was brought up to the Forest Preserve District and County Board in Kane County to build a minor league baseball stadium. In 1987, it looked good to have a new stadium built, as the Midwest League had awarded an expansion franchise to Kane County. It would've started play in 1987 but was held back until 1988 because the other expansion franchise in South Bend, Indiana was have some delays in construction of what would eventually become Stanley Coveleski Regional Stadium.

The stadium deal in Kane County fell through for the moment and the other expansion franchise would go to Rockford. It would be another two year before the Cougars officially came into existence and three years before they played their first game in Kane County.



1911 Aurora Blues. The player to the right of the manager, who is marked with an x is Casey Stengel., photo courtesy of the Aurora Historical Society.

Meanwhile, the Wausau Timbers who were playing in the Midwest League had been having attendance problems and were looking to be moved. In 1990, the team was sold to a group of investors who would move the team to the suburbs of Chicago the following year.