



From the Bullpen

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

To all the merry men of the Hot Stove League, a joyous New Year to each and every one of you and your families. Other than wishing for all of you to finish behind me in the 2008 HSL standings, I hope for the best of everything for all of you this year.

WINTER MEETING
SATURDAY, JANUARY 5, 2008, 6 P.M.
COLTON'S WOODFIRED GRILL
17501 WEST CENTER ROAD

It's all about repetition. Here is yet another reminder of our Winter Meeting this Saturday evening, January 5, 2008, at 6 p.m. at Colton's Woodfired Grill at 17501 West Center Road. Be ready to celebrate the **Cubs'** magical 2007 season!

BOOK REPORT: *THE TENDER BAR*

I want to do all of you the same favor that my good friend Joe Grant did for me a couple of weeks ago, which is, to recommend a book entitled *The Tender Bar*. Authored by J.R. Moehringer and published in 2005 -- and available at fine bookstores everywhere -- the *Tender Bar* is a remarkably entertaining "memoir" about the author's upbringing in a fatherless and utterly unconventional home in a small town in Long Island, New York, known as Manhasset. In essence, it is a story about a young man in search of male guidance who received it from the company and advice of a host of colorful characters who frequented a nearby tavern called, first, *Dickens* and later, *Publicans*. As I learned near the end of the book, Moehringer's closest friend growing up was his cousin McGraw, who grew up in the same crazy household, and who later in the book was revealed to be McGraw Milhaven, a former college pitcher for the Cornhusker baseball team and radio personality in Omaha, now on the airwaves in St. Louis.

One of my favorite lines in the book has to do with some advice that Moehringer received after agreeing to go with a first date who was a hottie to see a "clay" exhibit at a Manhattan museum, which turned out to be a nonstarter. After relating the story to one of the barflies at Publicans, the man known there as "Cager" "swiveled on his barstool to face me and he pushed his visor back so I could see his face." Cager then dispensed his sagacious advice: "Next time some broad tells you to take her to a museum, take her to f---ing Cooperstown." Loved it.

Since I usually only read baseball and political biographies, taking on *The Tender Bar* was a short leap of faith for me, but well worth the hop. I found myself wanting to read it in the morning before taking off for work, a most unusual reading time for me. Do yourself a favor and buy it and read it. I think you'll be glad you did.

BURSTING A BUBBLE

As many of you know, one of B.T.'s favorite things to say about me (at least, to my face) is that I have to be the only human being on earth who has personally witnessed a major league Perfect Game and Unassisted Triple Play. Because I have never thought this to be unlikely but wanted to go about testing this proclamation, I wrote a letter to the folks at *Baseball Digest*, who seem to have the ability to research any baseball question, no matter how arcane or improbable. After writing the letter several months ago, I sort of forgot about it until I whipped out my January/February 2008 *Baseball Digest* at a recent Nebraska basketball game, and was surprised to see my question answered on page 18, which I share with you here:

Players Who Participated in A Perfect Game and Unassisted Triple Play Game

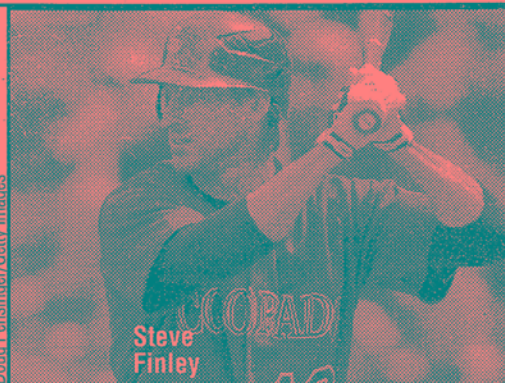
Player, Team	Perfect Game	Unassisted Triple Play
Chuck Knoblauch, Yankees	David Wells, Yankees (1998) David Cone, Yankees (1999)	Randy Velarde, A's (2000)
Derek Jeter, Yankees	David Wells, Yankees (1998) David Cone, Yankees (1999)	Randy Velarde, A's (2000)
Paul O'Neill, Reds/Yankees	Tom Browning, Reds (1988) David Wells, Yankees (1998) David Cone, Yankees (1999)	Randy Velarde, A's (2000)
Bernie Williams, Yankees	David Wells, Yankees (1998) David Cone, Yankees (1999)	Randy Velarde, A's (2000)
Tino Martinez, Yankees	David Wells, Yankees (1998) David Cone, Yankees (1999)	Randy Velarde, A's (2000)
Jorge Posada, Yankees	David Wells, Yankees (1998)	Randy Velarde, A's (2000)
Ricky Ledee, Yankees	David Cone, Yankees (1999)	Randy Velarde, A's (2000)
Scott Brosius, Yankees	David Wells, Yankees (1998) David Cone, Yankees (1999)	Randy Velarde, A's (2000)
Chipper Jones, Braves	Randy Johnson, D'Backs (2004)	Rafael Furcal, Braves (2003) Troy Tulowitzki, Rockies (2007)
Andruw Jones, Braves	Randy Johnson, D'Backs (2004)	Rafael Furcal, Braves (2003) Troy Tulowitzki, Rockies (2007)
Julio Franco, Braves	Randy Johnson, D'Backs (2004)	Rafael Furcal, Braves (2003)
Jim Edmonds, Angels/Cardinals	Kenny Rogers, Rangers (1994)	Rafael Furcal, Braves (2003)
Steve Finley, D'Backs/Rockies	Randy Johnson, D'Backs (2004)	Troy Tulowitzki, Rockies (2007)
Cy Young, Red Sox	Cy Young, Red Sox (1904)	Neal Ball, Indians (1909)
George Perring, Indians	Addie Joss, Indians (1908)	Neal Ball, Indians (1909)
Joe Birmingham, Indians	Addie Joss, Indians (1908)	Neal Ball, Indians (1909)
George Stovall, Indians	Addie Joss, Indians (1908)	Neal Ball, Indians (1909)
Harry Heilmann, Tigers	Charlie Robertson, White Sox (1922)	Johnny Neun, Tigers (1927)

As a fan, I have probably attended close to 200 major league games, including Mike Witt's perfect game on September 29, 1984 and John Valentin's unassisted triple play on July 8, 1994.

My brother-in-law swears that I am the only fan who has personally witnessed both a perfect game and an unassisted triple play.

I doubt that this is true, but I would like

Baseball Digest welcomes letters from readers. Full name, city and state or province *must* be included. Mail to: The Fans Speak Out, *Baseball Digest*, 990 Grove Street, Evanston, Illinois 60201-4370 or e-mail to: bkuenster@centurysports.net



Doug Pensinger/Getty Images

to know if any player has been in a game in which either pitcher pitched a perfect game, and also participated in a game in which a player from either team recorded an unassisted triple play? **David D. Ernst**

Omaha, Neb.

We uncovered 18 players who participated in a perfect game and a contest which featured an unassisted triple play in the major leagues. See the accompanying chart.

While Scott's bubble (and mine) may have been burst, B.T. quickly pointed out that this may all be well and so, but that I am still absolutely, unequivocally, and *without a doubt* the only person who has ever seen a perfect game, an unassisted triple play, and to witness Cal Ripken to play in his 2131st consecutive game. So at least I have that going for me.

WEBSITE REVISION

I hope that you approve of our annual updating of the website, featuring Linda's creation of a snappy new Hot Stove League logo. You will all recognize this year's featured player on our masthead, Nebraska's own Grover Cleveland Alexander. Ol' Pete is shown above in the prime of his career with the Philadelphia Phillies and then in his sub-prime during his tenure with the Chicago Cubs in the autumn of his career. If you like our new website front page, all the credit goes to our artistic director, Linda. If the new website design does not meet your fancy, I'll meet you in the back alley behind Colton's on Saturday night to discuss your grievance. *[Note from Linda: Not all of the webpages have been updated, so don't think something's wrong with your browser. I'll get everything ship-shape this weekend.]*

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Look forward to seeing all of you at the Winter Meeting on Saturday night.

Skipper