



# Babe Ruth

7-time World Series Champion  
 Career Batting Average: .342  
 Career Home Runs: 714  
 Career Pitching Record: 94-46  
 Career ERA: 2.28  
 1st in All-Time slugging percentage: .690  
 1st in All-Time OPS: 1.164



2019 Campaign

Edition No. 8

April 26, 2019

Brethren,

Here are the standings through games of Easter Sunday, April 21, 2019:

### STANDINGS THRU WEEK 4 ENDING APRIL 21, 2019

1	Tribe	1840.3	-
2	Monarchs	1778.3	62.0
3	Bums	1773.6	66.7
4	Redbirds	1691.2	149.1
5	Tigers	1670.6	169.7
6	Senators	1657.3	183.0
7	Skipjacks	1631.5	208.8
8	Bombers	1620.1	220.2
9	Wahoos	1596.1	244.2
10	Chiefs	1535.0	305.3
11	Bears	1498.7	341.6
12	Cubs	1459.8	380.5
13	Blues	1328.6	511.7

And here are your point totals for last week:

**POINTS FOR WEEK 4  
ENDING APRIL 21, 2019**

1	Skipjacks	556.7
2	Bums	527.2
3	Redbirds	521.2
4	Tribe	519.9
5	Bombers	511.8
6	Bears	483.5
7	Tigers	477.0
8	Senators	449.5
9	Monarchs	447.8
10	Blues	433.8
11	Wahoos	427.9
12	Cubs	423.4
13	Chiefs	421.6

Kudos to Itchie and his once moribund **Skipjacks** for having a scorching Week 4 and tallying 556.7 points for the week, advancing his team 3 spots in the standings. Maybe the **Jax** really are a contender this year. But probably not.

Congrats also to the **Tribe** for continuing to stay hot and maintaining the pole position. I was looking at Bob's lineup this past weekend, and was envious of his clever drafting of Paul Goldschmidt as his primary first sacker. But then as I read through his lineup, I saw that he had nine other players who actually had more points than Goldie, which makes it easy to understand why the **Tribe** is in 1st place. Is this the year that Underbelly has caught lightning in a bottle? Time will tell, but this team looks like the real deal. Take a look at the current point totals (through games of Wednesday, April 24) for Underbelly's first 14 draft picks:

1.	Paul Goldschmidt	116.5
2.	Rhys Hoskins	115.7
3.	George Springer	114.0
4.	Vladimir Guerrero Jr.	Debuts Friday night

5.	Joey Gallo	115.0
6.	Marcell Ozuna	116.0
7.	German Marquez	137.0
8.	Tyler Glasnow	129.0
9.	Blake Treinen	82.0
10.	Ross Stripling	85.0
11.	Paul DeJong	125.0
12.	Yoán Moncada	110.0
13.	Alex Reyes	-0.3
14.	Pete Alonso	122.3

In other words, Underbelly knew exactly what he was doing on Draft Day, and picked one whale of a team. In addition to this embarrassment of riches mined on Draft Day, the Outhouse Oracle has picked up the following bargains in the Free Agent Draft:

Jason Heyward	93.5
Dwight Smith, Jr.	92.7
Tyson Ross	53.0
Nick Anderson	51.5
Freddie Galvis	84.6

There are so many high-performance players on this team, it has to be tough for Bob to even set his lineup every day. That would be a good problem to have.

And now allow me to share with you the top pitchers and hitters for the 2019 Campaign, and the highest scoring pitchers and hitters for last week:

### TOP 25 PITCHERS

1.	Trevor Bauer	Bums	130.0
2.	Tyler Glasnow	Tribe	129.0
	Luis Castillo	Monarchs	129.0
4.	Justin Verlander	Bums	126.0
5.	José Berríos	Monarchs	124.0
6.	Marco Gonzales	Wahoos	116.0
	Matt Shoemaker	Wahoos	116.0
8.	German Márquez	Tribe	112.0
9.	Blake Snell	Tigers	111.0
10.	Patrick Corbin	Senators	109.0
11.	Max Fried	Skipjacks	108.0

12.	Cole Hamels	Monarchs	104.0
13.	Carlos Rodón	Bears	103.0
14.	Brad Keller	Blues	102.0
	Jon Gray	Chiefs	102.0
16.	Caleb Smith	Redbirds	101.0
17.	James Paxton	Bombers	100.0
	Zack Greinke	Chiefs	100.0
19.	Jake Arrieta	Tigers	99.0
20.	Stephen Strasburg	Bombers	98.0
21.	Masahiro Tanaka	Redbirds	94.0
	Mike Minor	Bums	94.0
23.	Joe Musgrove	Bums	91.5
24.	Frankie Montas	Chiefs	91.0
25.	Charlie Morton	Redbirds	90.0

### WHO'S HOT -- PITCHERS

1.	James Paxton	Bombers	79.0
2.	Jon Gray	Chiefs	62.0
3.	Trevor Bauer	Bums	58.0
4.	Stephen Strasburg	Bombers	54.0
5.	Clayton Kershaw	Tigers	47.0
6.	Reynaldo López	Blues	44.0
	Luis Castillo	Monarchs	44.0
8.	Mike Minor	Bums	42.0
9.	Carlos Carrasco	Blues	41.0
10.	Max Fried	Skipjacks	40.0
	Kyle Hendricks	Tigers	40.0
	Patrick Corbin	Senators	40.0
	Dereck Rodríguez	Skipjacks	40.0
14.	Cole Hamels	Monarchs	39.0
	Tyler Glasnow	Tribe	39.0
16.	Julio Urías	Skipjacks	37.0
17.	Kyle Freeland	Blues	36.0
18.	José Quintana	Redbirds	35.0
	Walker Buehler	Skipjacks	35.0
	Kyle Gibson	Tribe	35.0
21.	Justin Verlander	Bums	34.0
22.	Marcus Stroman	Senators	33.0

23.	Masahiro Tanaka	Redbirds	32.0
	Matt Strahm	Senators	32.0
	Martín Pérez	Bombers	32.0

### WHO'S NOT -- PITCHERS

1.	Steven Matz	Tribe	-21.0
2.	David Hess	Redbirds	-16.0
3.	Touki Toussaint	Bums	-13.0
	Marco Estrada	Blues	-13.0
5.	Jack Flaherty	Bears	-10.0
	Michael Pineda	Chiefs	-10.0
	Gerrit Cole	Senators	-10.0
8.	Mike Fiers	Senators	-9.0
9.	Adam Wainwright	Redbirds	-8.0
10.	Merrill Kelly	Tribe	-5.0
11.	Julio Teheran	Bums	-3.0
12.	Trent Thornton	Bombers	-2.0
13.	Max Scherzer	Wahoos	-1.0
	Nick Margevicius	Bears	-1.0
	Trevor Cahill	Wahoos	-1.0
	Brett Anderson	Tigers	-1.0
	Jakob Junis	Blues	-1.0
	Matt Harvey	Chiefs	-1.0

### TOP 25 HITTERS

1.	Cody Bellinger	Bombers	174.4
2.	Christian Yelich	Redbirds	169.1
3.	Anthony Rendon	Cubs	121.1
4.	Pete Alonso	Tribe	116.6
5.	Mitch Haniger	Senators	115.5
6.	Trey Mancini	Bombers	114.8
7.	Joc Pederson	Wahoos	114.6
8.	Mike Trout	Monarchs	109.7
9.	Domingo Santana	Blues	109.0
10.	Joey Gallo	Tribe	106.5
	Michael Conforto	Skipjacks	106.5
12.	Paul DeJong	Tribe	105.7

13.	Ronald Acuña Jr.	Redbirds	105.6
14.	Daniel Vogelbach	Chiefs	104.5
	Austin Meadows	Senators	104.5
16.	George Springer	Tribe	101.0
17.	Marcell Ozuna	Tribe	100.5
18.	Javier Báez	Bears	100.3
	Alex Gordon	Monarchs	100.3
20.	Yoán Moncada	Tribe	99.0
21.	Marcus Semien	Redbirds	98.5
22.	Eddie Rosario	Senators	97.7
23.	Elvis Andrus	Tigers	97.0
24.	Jose Altuve	Skipjacks	96.8
25.	Justin Smoak	Bums	96.3

### WHO'S HOT -- HITTERS

1.	Christian Yelich	Redbirds	78.0
2.	Joey Gallo	Tribe	57.5
3.	Justin Smoak	Bums	52.4
4.	Eddie Rosario	Senators	49.1
5.	Christian Walker	Bears	44.8
6.	Marcell Ozuna	Tribe	43.0
7.	Joc Pederson	Wahoos	42.5
8.	Omar Narváez	Chiefs	42.3
9.	Charlie Blackmon	Skipjacks	42.0
	Hunter Dozier	Redbirds	42.0
11.	J.T. Realmuto	Redbirds	41.2
12.	Javier Báez	Bears	40.7
13.	George Springer	Tribe	39.5
14.	Clint Frazier	Monarchs	39.1
15.	Renato Núñez	Cubs	38.1
16.	Alex Bregman	Bears	37.4
17.	Brian Goodwin	Cubs	36.0
	Shin-soo Choo	Wahoos	36.0
	Yandy Díaz	Tigers	36.0
20.	Dwight Smith Jr.	Tribe	35.5
21.	Cody Bellinger	Bombers	35.1
22.	Asdrúbal Cabrera	Skipjacks	34.1
23.	Andrelton Simmons	Senators	34.0

24.	Nelson Cruz	Cubs	33.5
	Brett Gardner	Skipjacks	33.5

### WHO'S NOT -- HITTERS

1.	Jurickson Profar	Wahoos	-3.0
2.	Jesús Aguilar	Cubs	-2.4
3.	Joey Wendle	Bums	-2.1
4.	Kendrys Morales	Bombers	-1.7
5.	Tyler O'Neill	Tribe	-1.5
	Manuel Margot	Bombers	-1.5
7.	Francisco Cervelli	Bums	-1.4
8.	Chris Taylor	Tigers	-0.3

### SKIP SEZ

- Getting Trevor Bauer, the top-rated pitcher, in the 3rd round was a steal for Tricco, but getting Louis Castillo in the 10th round was grand larceny on the part of Screech.
- Painful though it is to admit, PAwesome's drafting of Marco Gonzales in the 17th round and Matt Shoemaker in the 30th round (they are tied for 6th place with 116.0 points) and Itchie's pick of Max Fried (108.0 points) in the 29th round were positively brilliant. Same with Tirebiter's pickup of Caleb Smith (101.0) in the 24th round.
- James Paxton of the **Bombers** had a week for the ages, 79.0 points. Wow. Sizzling hot.
- Underbelly may want to think twice before putting Steven Matz back on the hill for his team, after his April 16 implosion against the Phillies. Without recording a single out, Matz gave up 4 hits, a walk, 8 runs, 6 earned, and took the loss while moon-walking the **Tribe** backward to the tune of -21. Them hurt.
- And speaking of hurtful outings, the **Senators** will hereinafter refer to last weekend as the "Easter Weekend Massacre," because of the punishing beatdowns taken by Senator starters Gerrit Cole (-10.0) and Collin McHugh (-19.0) (administered by the Rangers in Arlington), Mike Fiers (-9.0) and Shane Bieber (-10.0). Up until these four Easter lilies walked my team backwards to the tune of 48.0 points, the **Senators** had been on a bit of a roll, advancing to 4th place and within shouting distance of 2nd place.

- Owing Mike Fiers is akin to playing with fire. After notching 29.0 points on Opening Day in Oakland before my very eyes, Fiers had another strong outing (29.0 points) in his next start on April 2. But his next start after that was a -14.0 dazzler, followed by a 3.0 outing, followed by the -9.0 drubbing. He may soon be available.
- Cody Bellinger as the last pick in the 2nd round by Mouse is turning out to be one heckuva decision. Christian Yelich as the third overall pick by the **Redbirds** was a plum. Shamu's selection of Anthony Rendon in the 4th round was sweet indeed, as was Underbelly's snag of Pete Alonso (fourth overall) in the 14th round.
- Who would have guessed that Alex Gordon would be among the top 25 hitters with 100.3 points, same as Javier Baez of the **Bears**? Beautiful free agent pickup, Screech.
- But actually, the Free Agent Pickup of the Year so far belongs to B.T. for his grabbing of Daniel Vogelbach (104.5 points, 8 HRs), almost three weeks ago. I hate to admit it, but I hadn't even heard of the guy until this week. Unfortunately, a few of us still have to punch the timeclock.

### **THE TRIP (AN UPDATE)**

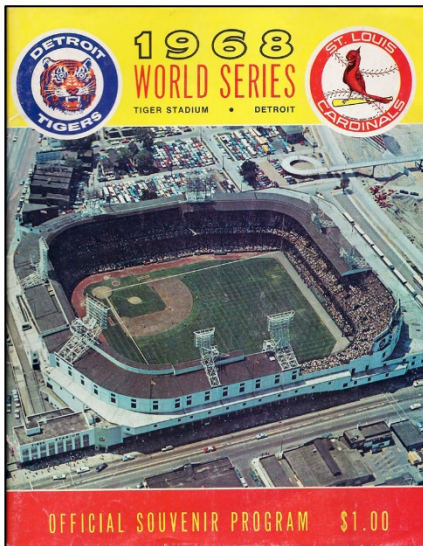
The Hot Stove League annual Trip is still a "go" for June 7-8 at Globe Life Park in Arlington. We will plan to see games on Friday night and Saturday evening, when the Texas Rangers will face the Oakland Athletics. If you don't yet have transportation lined up, you should probably take a look at flights or talk with B.T. about a spot in the Mobile Men's Room that he will be driving down to Arlington.

### **1968 WORLD SERIES GAME 7**

I fully realize that I may have bored one or all of you with this story at least once if not many times before, but please indulge me at least one more time. My passion for speculating baseball dates back to the 1968 World Series between the St. Louis Cardinals of Bob Gibson and Tim McCarver, Lou Brock and Curt Flood, and the Detroit Tigers of Denny McLain, Mickey Lolich, Al Kaline and Norm Cash, among others. My sixth grade teacher at Pershing Elementary, Mrs. Reicher, allowed us to listen to the World Series games that October as long as we had transistor radios with earpieces. Anxious to have any excuse for avoiding schoolwork, I came to school every day during that Series fully equipped to



listen in on the games. Although I was rooting for the Cardinals because of Bob Gibson being one of Nebraska's own, it was such a great Series that I was forever hooked on baseball from that point forward.



I recently bought a CD with a replay of Game 7, and listened to it while driving to and from work. It is a terrific radio broadcast to hear, with the game being announced by long-time Tiger broadcaster Ernie Harwell and former Dodger great Pee Wee Reese. The CD includes a pregame interview by Joe Garagiola of future Hall-of-Famer Eddie Matthews, who was a pinch hitter for the Tigers in 1968 and had already announced that he would be retiring from baseball after the Series. During the interview, Matthews modestly commented that he hoped he wouldn't be called into service for Game 7 because that would mean that his team was behind the Cardinals. Because the Tigers never fell behind in the game, manager Mayo Smith never had to call upon Matthews to pinch hit.

Garagiola also interviewed Cardinal right-fielder Roger Maris, who like Matthews had already announced his retirement from baseball and was playing in his last game. Even though manager Red Schoendienst didn't play Maris against left-handed pitchers all season long, he started him in Game 7 against left-hander Mickey Lolich, most likely because of his pending retirement.

Red Schoendienst's wife belted out the National Anthem, but her shrill rendition is a bit difficult to listen to. However, she was a much less controversial choice than the Tigers' selection of Jose Feliciano to sing the Star Spangled Banner prior to Game 5 in Detroit. Feliciano's unconventional and long interpretation of the anthem "aroused considerable controversy," with the Tigers and NBC receiving thousands of angry letters and telephone calls. Mickey Lolich blamed Feliciano's inordinately long rendition for causing him to get cold after his warmups, leading to him giving up three early runs.

But I digress wildly. Game 7 was an absolute classic, matching up Mickey Lolich on two days' rest against the great Bob Gibson, who had a 22-9 record for the season, an ERA of

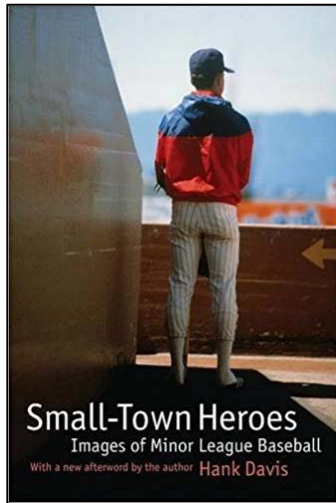
1.12, 13 shutouts and 28 complete games. Not only that, but Gibson had earlier won his seventh (7th) consecutive World Series start, dating back to the 1964 Series against the Yankees. He was also pitching on three days' rest instead of Lolich's two.

In this famous duel, Lolich and Gibson held their respective opponents scoreless through six innings, and Gibson seemed untouchable. However, in the top of the 7th, with two outs, Gibson surrendered hits to Norm Cash and Willie Horton. With two on and two out, Jim Northrup then mashed the horsehide to deep center field, where perennial Gold Glover Curt Flood misjudged it and briefly started in on the ball before turning around to go back. The ball one-hopped the warning track, and Northrup wound up with a triple and two RBIs. The Tigers held on to win 4-1, with the Cardinals' only run being a bottom of the ninth home run by Mike Shannon. Both Lolich and Gibson pitched complete games, and Lolich finished the Series with three wins and the Series MVP award.

The Curt Flood miscue has been the source of a great deal of controversy over the years. Jim Northrup has said that the hit was "forty feet over Flood's head," and that Flood didn't have a chance to catch it. Others, including the late Denny McLain, have claimed that "Flood blew it," and have asserted that Flood would have likely caught the ball if he hadn't initially misjudged it and started in before reversing direction.

In addition to the CD containing one of the greatest World Series Game 7s of all time, there are some wonderful commercials (such as Petulia Clark singing the praises of the Plymouth Valiant) and some really wonderful banter between Ernie Harwell and Pee Wee Reese. I will bring it with me to the Trip in Arlington, and hopefully there will be a chance for all of you to hear it. No, I insist.

**BOOK REVIEW:**  
***"SMALL-TOWN HEROES***  
***IMAGES OF MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL"***  
**by Hank Davis**



A couple of weeks ago as I was searching my home bookshelves for *The Catcher was a Spy* for a re-reading, I came across a book, *Small-Town Heroes*, that I realized I had never read. So I read it, and man, is it good.

The author, a Toronto psychologist by the name of Hank Davis, decided back in 1992 to visit a bunch of minor league venues and to interview the young ballplayers who were trying to make their own dreams come true, advancing through the minor leagues until hopefully being called up to The Show. His visits began with four minor league venues in Ontario, Canada, which are no longer even in existence: London, Hamilton, Welland and St. Catherines. Later on, after a swing through upper New York State, Pennsylvania and Ohio, Davis visited a number of small-town venues in the Appalachian (Rookie League Advanced) League (Bluefield, WV, Bristol, VA, Elizabethton, TN) and eventually even made it over to the Hawkeye State (a brave soul, that man) for visits to the ballparks in Cedar Rapids (home of the Kernels), Clinton (home of the Lumberjacks) and Burlington (home of the Bees).

Somewhat surprisingly, I have only been to a few of the ballparks mentioned by Davis in this book: in Durham, N.C. (I have only been to the new one, which was being built in 1993, not the old one that he visited); in Cedar Rapids; Columbus, Ohio; Erie, Pennsylvania; and Burlington, Iowa. After reading his book, I know I want to make it to a number of the venues in the Appalachian League, the good Lord willing and the creek don't rise.

Although the author is not much of a phrase-turner in the mold of, say, a Red Smith, a Jim Murray, a Mike Royko or even a Tom Shatel, there are a lot of good stories included in the book. One of the best is about Jeff Bannister, most recently the manager of the Texas Rangers (2015-18). In 1994, Bannister was on the first rung of his managerial ladder, serving as the skipper of the Welland (Ontario) Pirates of the New York Penn

League. In his interview of Bannister, Davis learned that Bannister grew up in LaMarque, Texas, and that he injured his knee playing football as a sophomore in high school, requiring him to have knee surgery. The following year, Bannister found out that he had bone cancer in his leg, and spent his 17th birthday in a hospital getting that news, and then stayed in the hospital for the next four and a half months undergoing a series of surgeries. His condition was so bad that they talked about amputating his leg just to save his life, but they were able to eventually cure his cancer without that drastic step being taken.

After believing that he was in the clear, Bannister became ill again that summer and had to go back into the hospital for three more weeks and more operations, a total of seven in all. The doctors told him to forget about playing football, and said he would probably never be able to run again. However, Bannister persevered and was able to play baseball his senior year, and did well enough that he got a scholarship at the University of Houston.

As a freshman in college, Bannister was playing catcher and was involved in a collision at home plate with a runner who was trying to score from 3rd. The impact crushed three vertebrae in his neck, and he had to have two more surgeries just to save his life. He was paralyzed from the neck down for about ten days, and his left leg was partially paralyzed for the next six weeks from the trauma to the spinal cord.

Somehow, Bannister recovered from all of this and went on to play two years of college baseball, and then was drafted by the Pirate organization. He played six years in the minors, and finally got called up to the parent club in 1991. On July 23, 1991, Jim Leland gave him the opportunity to pinch hit for Doug Drabek against the Atlanta Braves. Dan Petrie was pitching, and Bannister rapped a single to left field. This turned out to be Bannister's *only at-bat* in the majors, because he subsequently had to have arm surgery which effectively ended his career as a major league player. **He retired with a batting average of 1.000.** Bannister bragged to Davis that he is listed in the Baseball Encyclopedia right between Sal Bando and Ernie Banks, which shows his entire career line of one at-bat, and one hit.

Because he was a good egg, the Pirates asked Bannister to become a coach and eventually a manager, and the rest is baseball history. A great story, and well told.

There are also good stories about numerous other players who were then in the minors and eventually made to the majors, but when he was writing the book between 1992 and 1994, Davis of course had no idea which players would make it to The Show and which ones would wash out. Included are stories about Derek Jeter, who was then playing for the Greensboro North Carolina Hornets, and had already been dubbed "Yankee shortstop of the future"; and Richie Sexson, who was then 18 years of age and playing in Burlington, North Carolina, far from his home in Washington. At that time, Sexson was just a few weeks past graduating from high school, and struggling with a batting average of .167.

After I finished *Small-Town Heroes*, I thought to myself that this was a book that I wish I had written. Maybe I still will.

In any event, if any of you are in need of a good baseball book and want to borrow my copy of *Small-Town Heroes*, let me know.

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That's it for this issue. Carry on.

Skipper