



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. 26

October 25, 2019

Brethren:



I hope that you are all enjoying the World Series as much as I have been so far, and I imagine that you are all as amazed as I am that the Washington Nationals have become such a post-season juggernaut, manhandling the Astros at Minute Maid and now heading back home to the District with a 2-games-to-none lead. Who would have guessed that this team that struggled to make it to the playoffs, eking out a come-from-behind (3 runs in the bottom of the 8th inning) Wild Card win against the Brewers, would then go on to stun the powerful Dodgers

3 games to 2--including belting out back-to-back home runs against Clayton Kershaw in the decisive game at Dodger Stadium--before de-pantsing the St. Louis Cardinals and sweeping them in 4 for the National League crown. That's eight, count 'em, eight straight postseason wins for this team that has fared so poorly in the postseason in the recent past after winning their division multiple different times this decade. Maybe getting rid of Harper was the formula for their current success.

And who would have believed back on May 23 that the Nats, who had a record at that time of 19-31, almost the same as the lowly Detroit Tigers (18-29), would go on to finish out the season and the postseason to date with a record of 84-40 from that day forward, besting the Astros (81-43) for the best record in baseball during that particular time.

Okay, so I didn't figure this out on my own, but one of my old favorite authors, Thomas Bowell of the Washington Post, had a great column earlier this week laying out some of these crazy statistics. Here is a link to that article, if you are interested in what Bos had to say.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/the-world-series-is-back-in-dc-after-86-years-enjoy-the-ride-because-anything-can-happen/2019/10/21/6856483a-f376-11e9-a285-882a8e386a96_story.html

I didn't think I'd have a dog in this hunt, but even though I like the Astros' organization and players, I am now entirely and irretrievably in the Nats' camp, for this Series. Seeing all of their enthusiasm and excitement and their capers and hijinks and monkeyshines in the dug-out has me pulling for them to win this World Series, in the first trip for a Washington team to the Fall Classic since 1933.

Coming back from an 0-and-2 deficit and facing 3 games on the road is a tall order for any World Series contestant, even the powerful Astros, who have already employed their two aces and tonight must rest their hopes on the shaky arm and psyche of Zack Greinke. However, for those of you who are pulling for the Astros, or for a 6- or 7-game World Series, rest assured that there is precedent for such a comeback. As recently as 1996, well within our collective memories, the pitching-rich Atlanta Braves, the defending World Champions, stormed into the Bronx and pistol-whipped (12-1 and 4-0) the Yankees in their home ballpark, capturing games 1 and 2 and then heading home to Atlanta for what looked to be shaping up as a clean sweep. Not to happen to the beloved Bronx Bombers of Mouse and Screech, however. As history has recorded it, the Yanks marched into Atlanta with one thing in mind, to knock the brooms and the tomahawks out of the hands of the Atlanta faithful, and they proceeded to do just that, taking all three games in Atlanta before returning home to Yankee Stadium to complete their work in a 4-games-to-2 Series win. It was the Yankees first championship in 18 years.



Oh, yes, and the Yankees faced Maddux, Smoltz¹, Glavine and Avery in those four final games of the Series, by far the best starting quartet in the Majors at that time, and one of the best of all time. Atlanta hasn't been burned that bad since being set ablaze by General Sherman's bluecoats during the Civil War.

All of that said, enjoy the game tonight and the rest of the 2019 Fall Classic. And go Nats!

D-DAY PLUS 75



Operation OVERLORD

1944-2019

Last night I was fortunate enough to join Mouse and his wife Brenda and others to hear the 24th Annual Governor's Lecture in the Humanities at the Holland Center, featuring Dwight

¹ Linda found an absolutely great article about Smoltzie written by Tom Verducci in 1996, which tells us that, like his father before him, Smoltz is an accordion player of some regard. His father was also an usher at old Tiger Stadium, and played the accordion at the Tigers' 1968 World Series celebration. For Smoltz, it was a dream come true to be drafted by his home state Tigers, even in the 22nd round. Although it pained him to be traded away from his beloved Tigers (at age 20, straight up for Doyle Alexander of the Braves--a move that is probably still killing Big Guy), this of course helped him pitch his way to a Hall of Fame career.

David Eisenhower II, talking about his grandfather as the Allied Supreme Commander and CEO of *Operation OVERLOAD*, the D-Day landing in Normandy, France. Truly a fascinating subject and an extremely knowledgeable speaker.

A couple of the interesting takeaways from Eisenhower's talk were as follows:



Omaha Beach, in the vernacular of Operation Overlord, was in fact named after Omaha, Nebraska, most likely because one of the members of Eisenhower's staff was from Nebraska.



The real purpose of Operation Overlord was not just to win the war against Germany--the Allied game plan was already working and decidedly heading in that direction--but to establish the roles of America and Britain in the future order of the world, and especially Europe.



In 1954, while Ike was President and set to give the commencement speech at the University of Pennsylvania--where his brother Milton was the President--there was a forecast of rain for the outdoor graduation ceremony. As brother Milton paced the room, fretting and fussing, Ike calmly told him that, "I haven't worried about rain since 1944." Great line.



President Eisenhower's birth name was David Dwight Eisenhower, not Dwight David Eisenhower, but at some point he started going by Dwight David Eisenhower, apparently because he thought it made him sound more intelligent. Hence, his son became Dwight David Eisenhower (the first) and his grandson became Dwight David Eisenhower II. As Johnny Carson used to say, *I did not know that*.

Anyway, it was a fun and interesting evening, and I even got to spend 30 seconds with Magpie, so it was a banner night all the way around. Thanks again, Mouse!

FALL BALL

Last weekend while visiting Emily in Phoenix, she and I and her boyfriend went to an Arizona Fall League game at Sloan Park in Mesa, the Spring Training home of the Cubs. This was a first for me, this Fall League business. I learned that there are six Arizona Fall League teams, and each of them have five different Major League clubs assigned to the team, where they send their most promising young prospects for additional spit and polish.

The game we saw was between the Mesa Solar Sox and the Peoria Javelinas, won by the Solar Sox by the score of 5-1. Although I don't remember a single name from the game, we saw a lot of good talent on the field, that is for sure. I'm hoping that this will eventuate into some sterling selections in upcoming Hot Stove League Drafts.

One of the things I noticed at this game is that there are a lot of autograph-seeking hounds who bring buckets of baseballs with them to get signed by these young, up-and-coming stars of the game. Most of the autograph seekers seemed to be adults, no doubt prospecting for future profits from the baseball memorabilia business. Sad, that part.





* * * * *

Alright, lads, that's it for now. I start a jury trial on Monday morning, so I had best get back to the grind. Because of said jury trial, it may be a spell before the next edition of *FTB*. Enjoy the respite.

Skipper