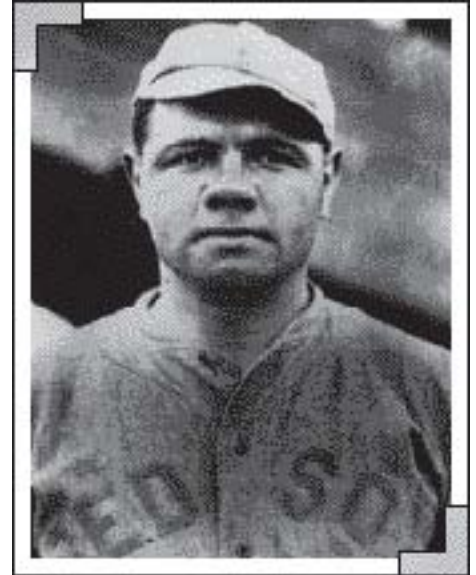


Handout # 8 Baseball Champions

Babe Ruth

George Herman Ruth, Jr. was born on February 6, 1895 at his parents home on Emory Street in Baltimore, Maryland. Ruth grew up in the rough environment surrounding his father's Lombard and Camden Street saloons. He was stealing from local stores and throwing stones at delivery men by the age of five. At seven, he was chewing tobacco, cutting classes at school and giving authority figures a hard time.

Since he wouldn't behave, his parents declared him unruly and sent him to St. Mary's Industrial School, an institution for orphans and delinquent boys. The school was operated by the Catholic order of Xaverian Brothers who were known for their strict discipline. Ruth stayed there on and off until he was eighteen years old.



It was at St. Mary's where Ruth was influenced by Brothers Gilbert and Matthias. Brother Matthias became a substitute father to him, directing his aimless energies into the sport of baseball. Ruth proved to be a natural at almost every position on the baseball diamond. He was so good in fact that at the age of eight he was on the twelve year olds' team and by twelve he was playing baseball with the sixteen and seventeen year olds.



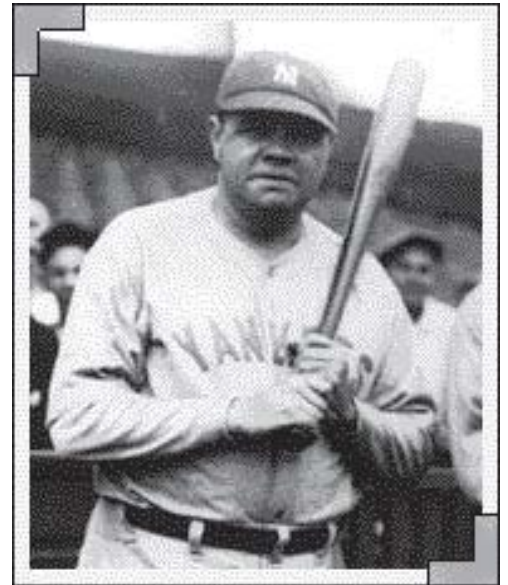
By 1914 Ruth had a reputation as Baltimore's best young baseball player. He pitched, caught, played the field, ran well, threw hard and hit the ball a mile. His local fame drew the attention of Jack Dunn, owner of the Baltimore Orioles (a minor league team). In February of 1914, Dunn signed Ruth to his first professional contract. When he signed the rookie Dunn also had to assume Ruth's legal guardianship, since Ruth was only nineteen at the time. The team called Ruth, Jack Dunn's "baby," which the local sportswriters eventually changed to "Babe." The name stuck. By mid-season 1914, Dunn sold the young player to the Boston Red Sox.

When Babe got to Boston, it was one of the first times he had been anywhere outside of St. Mary's. This was hard for him as well as the team. He had no self-control and little education.

At first Ruth started out as a pitcher, going 18-8 in his first season. In 1916 he got his first chance to pitch in a World Series and made the most of his one appearance. After giving up a run in the first inning, he drove in the tying run himself, then he held the Dodgers scoreless for the next eleven innings until his team could score the winning run.

It wasn't until 1919 that the Red Sox discovered how impressive Ruth was with a bat. Given the chance to play every day (mostly in left field), he responded by hitting 29 home runs, the most ever by a player in a single season at that point.

Ruth was sold to the New York Yankees in 1920. His first year as a Yankee he hit 54 home runs. His batting average was an amazing .847. No one except for Ruth himself has come close to beating this record.



In 1921, when only 26 years old, he hit an astonishing 59 home runs. His performance carried the Yankees into the World Series for the first time in the team's history. The Yankees became the most popular team in baseball. This success allowed the owner to build a new stadium. Yankee Stadium, often called the "house that Ruth built," opened in 1923. That year the Yankees won their third straight American League title and, for the first time, the World Series.

In 1927, Ruth hit 60 home runs. This single-season record lasted until another Yankee outfielder, Roger Maris, hit 61 in 1961. The 1927 Yankee team was regarded as the best baseball team of all time. Ruth, first baseman Lou Gehrig, and second baseman Tony Lazzeri, finished first, second, and third in homers.

Ruth's success made him baseball's first highly paid superstar. His \$80,000 salary in 1930 and 1931 was even higher than that of Herbert Hoover, the President of the United States. Already a legend, Ruth became a mythical figure in the 1932 World Series when he stood at home plate in the fifth inning of the third game, and pointed his bat out to centerfield as the pitcher prepared to throw the ball. On the next pitch Ruth rocketed the ball into the Wrigley field bleachers, right where he had pointed.

Even after his playing days were over, Ruth's popularity with fans of all ages never faded. He had hoped to become a manager but his unruly and irresponsible behavior made this dream an impossibility. Long after he died of cancer in 1948, Ruth remained a symbol of stardom for the Yankees and the game of baseball.

Roger Maris

Roger Maris was born in Hibbing, Minnesota on September 10, 1934. His father, who worked for the Great Northern Railroad, moved the family to North Dakota in 1942, where Roger and Rudy, his older brother, grew up. The Maris brothers played sports and attended Shanley High School in Fargo, North Dakota, where they were standouts in football and basketball.

Roger played baseball in the American Legion program during the summers, since the North Dakota high schools did not have an interscholastic program. He was also an excellent football player as well. In one game against Devil's Lake his senior year, he scored four touchdowns on kickoff returns to set a national high school record.



Roger was recruited by legendary football coach Bud Wilkinson to play for the University of Oklahoma. But since he had a professional baseball contract waiting, Roger gave up his scholarship at the University of Oklahoma to pursue a professional career in baseball. He signed a \$15,000 contract to play for the Cleveland Indians organization in 1952.

He spent four years in the minor leagues before being moved up to the major league team. His first year in the majors, Roger hit 14 home runs and drove in 51 RBI's for the Cleveland Indians. Midway through his second season he was traded to the Kansas City Athletics where he finished the season with 28 home runs and 81 RBI's. In his third year, Roger was selected to the 1959 All-Star team.

After the 1959 season, Roger was traded to the New York Yankees. In 1960 Roger was leading the majors with 27 home runs and 69 RBI's by the halfway point in the season and was again named to the All-Star team. A sliding injury caused him to miss 17 games, but, he still finished the season with 39 home runs, only one behind Mickey Mantle. He also hit two World Series home runs.

In 1961, Roger and teammate Mickey Mantle received national attention as they chased the single season home run record of 60 set by Babe Ruth in 1927. The two Yankee hitters went back and forth leading the majors in home runs during the summer. Roger became the first player in history to hit 50 home runs by the end of August. Mantle hit 46. Mantle became injured and missed many end of the season games.

Pressure was growing on Roger. Many sportswriters did not want to see Ruth's record broken. Roger tied Ruth on September 26, hitting his 60th home run of the year. Then, on October 1, 1961, the final day of the season Roger, hit his 61st home run against the Boston Red Sox to set a new home run record. The Yankees won the game one to nothing on Roger's home run, and went on to win the 1961 World Series.

In later years Roger still hit well but never again would he set another record. In 1962, he hit 33 home runs and drove in 100 RBI's and the Yankees repeated as World Series Champions. In 1963, Roger missed much of the season with injuries, playing in only 90 games, but still hitting 23 home runs. In 1964, Roger hit 26 home runs and again the Yankees won the pennant and a trip to the World Series. Roger injured his wrist in 1965 and was only able to play in 46 games.

After the 1966 season, the Yankees traded Roger to the St. Louis Cardinals, where he played his last two years. In 1967, Roger helped the Cardinals go to the World Series, where he homered and drove in a Cardinal record 7 RBI's as St. Louis won the World Series. In 1968, Roger announced his retirement but once again helped the Cardinals return to the World Series.

In all, Roger played in seven World Series in the Sixties, hitting six World Series home runs and driving in 18 World Series RBI's. He finished his career with 275 home runs. Roger Maris died on December 14, 1985 of lymphoma cancer at the age of 51.



Roger Clemens

William Roger Clemens (born August 4, 1962 in Dayton, Ohio), nicknamed "The Rocket," is among the preeminent Major League baseball pitchers of the 1980s, 1990s, and early 2000s.

Clemens spent most of his childhood in Texas. He attended high school in the Houston area, and was on the mound when the University of Texas won the 1983 College World Series. He was drafted 19th overall by the Boston Red Sox, making his major league debut on May 15, 1984. In 1986 his 24 wins helped guide the Red Sox to the World Series (which they lost) and earned Clemens the



American League Most Valuable Player award for the regular season and the first of his six Cy Young Awards (he also won the award in 1987,1991,1997,1998 and 2001). Hall of Fame slugger Hank Aaron angered the hurler by saying that pitchers should not be eligible for the MVP. "I wish he were still playing," Clemens responded. "I'd show him how valuable I was." Clemens remains the only starting pitcher since 1968 to win a league MVP award.

Clemens is one of only two pitchers to have thrown 20 strikeouts in a 9-inning major league game (Kerry Wood is the other). Remarkably, Clemens accomplished the feat twice; on April 29,1986 against the Seattle Mariners, and on September 18,1996 against the Detroit Tigers, more than 10 years later.

Clemens signed with the Toronto Blue Jays in 1997. In his two seasons there, he won the Cy Young Award. Then, to the disgust of many Boston fans, Clemens was traded to the New York Yankees before the 1999 season for David Wells, Homer Bush, and Graeme Lloyd. In 2000, he became the first pitcher in history to start a year 20–1. He finished the season at 20-3, at the age 39. In 1999 and 2000, he won World Series titles with the Yankees.

Early in 2003, he announced his retirement, effective at the end of that season. On June 13, 2003, pitching against the St. Louis Cardinals in Yankee Stadium, Clemens recorded his 300th career win and 4,000th career strikeout, the first player in history to record both milestones in the same game. The 300th win came on his fourth try; the Yankee bullpen blew his chance of a win in his previous two attempts. He became the 21st pitcher ever to record 300 wins and just the third ever to record 4,000 strikeouts, joining Nolan Ryan (5,714) and Steve Carlton (4,136). His career record upon reaching the milestones was an impressive 300-155; his record at the end of the season was 310-160 with 4,099 strikeouts.

He chose to put off his retirement, signing a one-year deal with his hometown Houston Astros on January 12, 2004, joining close friend and former Yankees teammate Andy Pettitte. On May 5, 2004, Clemens recorded his 4,137th career strikeout to place him second on the all-time list behind Nolan Ryan, and finished the season with 4,317 strikeouts. Clemens had an 18-4 record in 2004, giving him a career record of 328-164. He has more career wins than any other right-handed pitcher of the "live ball era" (post-1920), with only Steve Carlton (by one win) and Warren Spahn ahead of him in that category.





His storied temper has gotten him into hot water more than once. On October 10, 1990 he was ejected in the second inning of an American League Championship Series game for words with home plate umpire Terry Cooney. Clemens was suspended for the first five games of the 1991 season and fined \$10,000. (Ironically, he was only one of two major leaguers who refused to cross the picket line when the umpires later went on strike). In the first inning of the second game of the 2000 World Series, Clemens threw a piece of a shattered bat at New York Mets' Mike Piazza, clearing both benches. Clemens was fined \$50,000.

Clemens final appearance in 2004 was as Houston's starter in the seventh and deciding game of the National League Championship Series. He lost. This was only his fifth loss in a Houston uniform, the first in over two months. He had been 8-0 over his last 13 starts, running his record to 20-4, including two postseason victories.

A third would have been sweeter than any of the 338 in his career.

To bring the World Series to his hometown, to a franchise that was born only one year before he was, would have been an indescribably satisfying accomplishment for this Texas icon. To have it slip away after being within his grasp, that is something that will haunt him and Houston fans for a lifetime.

Clemens married Debra Godfrey on November 24, 1984. They have 4 sons: Koby, Kory, Kacy, and Kody ("K" is a baseball scorer's notation for "strikeout"). He attributes his longevity to a grueling fitness regimen.



In 1992 Roger and his wife established The Roger Clemens Foundation, an entity dedicated to helping children. It raises funds through golf tournaments, silent auctions and other events.

The Foundation exists and its properties are used exclusively and solely for the purpose of carrying on and supporting educational, charitable, literary, scientific and religious activities for children, with a special emphasis on underprivileged and at-risk children, and children with special needs.