

Levine, Peter, ed. *Baseball History 2: An Annual of Original Baseball Research*. Westport, Connecticut: Meckler Books, 1989. Pp. vii. 181. Photographs. \$22.50.

Peter Levine began *Baseball History* as a journal in 1986 with the intention that it would be published three times each year. In 1988 those plans were abandoned and *Baseball History* became an annual publication in hard cover. This volume is the second in that series of annuals. Levine's skillful editing has made this generally a publication of high quality, but there are signs that the amount of quality material being written by baseball historians may not be sufficient to sustain this project. Given the competition from mainstream historical journals, sub-speciality journals, and the *Journal of Sport History*, there may simply not be enough material out there.

This current issue, *Baseball History 2*, contains eight articles, a short story, several book reviews, and a review essay of baseball films. Three of the articles are of some major interest to the sport historian.

First, is Robert Barney's exploration of baseball in Canadian culture, including the now familiar claim that Abner Doubleday may have been Canadian. There is some interesting material here on baseball in Canada during the 19th century and early 20th century, and on Adam Ford.

The second article of note is Debra Shattuck's survey of women and baseball in the United States between 1866 and 1954. Although much of the material on the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League is a restatement of Sharon Taylor-Roepke's work, the material on the 19th century and early 20th century will be of interest to baseball historians.

The third article of historical value is from the dean of baseball historians, David Voigt, and deals with baseball crowds and fans. As with all of Voigt's work this piece represents quality research and writing, with materials presented in a lucid and often entertaining fashion. Voigt shows us once again why he is the premier baseball historian. In this piece he looks at attendance figures and trends, crowd composition, marketing, crowd violence and control. The section on crowd composition includes a challenge to the work of Guttman, Kirsch and Riess on the subject. Voigt suggests that there is much yet to be done here, and that in fact the limitations for crowd study may put any definitive statements in the nether world for the foreseeable future. He chastises baseball historians for having failed "to acknowledge the complexity of the problem." On crowd violence Voigt points out the lack of historical vision of the contemporary jeremiahs, but also acknowledges the current state of the problem. As always Voigt challenges baseball historians to do better, and as always he suggests ways in which "better" can be done.

Aside from these three pieces of particular value to the academic historian, there are short pieces of interest on Mark Koenig and Dick Bartell, one on Jack Chesbro, a reminiscence by several of McGraw's former players on the great manager, a piece on Johnny Vander Meer's back to back no-hitters, and an account of several pitchers who enjoyed great success against Babe Ruth. Most of these are entertaining, well-written, but not particularly startling.

The short story included in this volume is another of W. P. Kinsella's baseball stories. This one, "The Dixon Cornbelt League," is a particularly poignant story about the ability of a player to come to terms with the reality that he will never make the majors. As with all of Kinsella's stories this one has a nice twist on what could be a rather conventional theme.

The film review essay by Douglas Noverr takes an interesting look at "Bull Durham," "Major League," and "Eight Men Out," placing them within the context of baseball films of the last two decades, while assessing their strengths and weaknesses.

Overall *Baseball History 2* makes a notable contribution to the growing body of baseball history and should be of interest to the sport historian generally. In addition Kinsella's story is a nice reward coming, as it does, at the end of this latest volume from Meckler Press. However at \$22.50 you may want to check it out at your nearest library, given the considerable competition for the personal book dollar of sport historians these days.

University of Central Florida

Richard C. Crepeau