

**Odd Baseball Events**  
**Odd Home Run Events**  
**Intentional Base on Balls (IBB) Trivia**

**Chapter 12**

*The interesting facts following **Chapter 12** look at some strange outcomes and events in baseball. The chapter closes with a discussion of the intentional bases on balls (IBB). The IBB statistic took on new importance due to Barry Bonds. In fact Barry Bonds received an intentional base on balls with the bases loaded.*

**From Baseball to Oddball**

- Herb Washington, a pinch runner for the Oakland Athletics, appeared in 105 games during the 1974 and 1975 seasons. He stole 31 bases and scored 33 runs, but never batted once.
- Robin Yount drove in exactly 77 runs in three successive seasons (1990-1992).
- Rickey Gutierrez had a batting average of .261 for Houston for three consecutive seasons. He was 79 for 303 in 1997, 128 for 491 in 1998, and 70 for 268 in 1999.
- Luis Castillo batted .334 (180 for 539) for the Florida Marlins in 2000. What makes this statistic so unusual is he only drove in 17 runs. This amount of RBIs is the fewest for any batter with a .300 average and over 500 at-bats.
- Harry Heilmann won the American League batting title in four consecutive odd-numbered years. Heilmann's average was .394 in 1921, .403 in 1923, .393 in 1925, and .398 in 1927.
- Carlos Delgado's first Major League home run came on April 4, 1994 and was the only home run he hit in that game. The 100<sup>th</sup>, 200<sup>th</sup>, and 300<sup>th</sup> home runs he belted had a very unusual pattern. His 100<sup>th</sup> home run was the first of two home runs he hit on September 17, 1998. His 200<sup>th</sup> home run was the third of a three-home run game on April 20, 2001. His 300<sup>th</sup> home run was the first of a four-home run game on September 25, 2003.
- New York Yankee outfielder Gene Woodling hit three home runs off of Cleveland's Early Wynn in 1951. Each was a two-run home run, and they came on June 24, July 24,

and August 24.

- Rod Carew is the only American League player to win the batting title without hitting a home run. Carew led the league in batting with an average of .318 for the Minnesota Twins but did not hit a home run in 1972. It turned out that for his 19-year career this was the only season in which he failed to homer.
- Tommy Davis is the only player to drive in 150 or more runs in a season and never have another 100-RBI season. Davis knocked in 153 runs in 1962. His next highest RBI year was just 89.
- George Sisler is the only player to have a 200-plus hit season and score fewer than 70 runs. He had 205 hits and scored just 67 runs.
- Of all players with 3000 hits, Paul Molitor was the only player whose 3000<sup>th</sup> hit was a triple.
- Manuel Lee is the only player to strike out more than 100 times in a season without hitting a home run in that season. He batted .234 in 445 at-bats for the Toronto Blue Jays in 1991 and struck out 107 times without hitting a home run.
- Albert Pujols is the only player in baseball history to begin his career with three consecutive seasons of 30 home runs and 100 RBIs.
- Willie Mays is only player to strike out more than 1500 times and wind up with a career batting average over .300. For his career he struck out 1536 times and his career batting average was .302.
- John Valentin is the only player to accomplish all three of these feats in his career. He executed an unassisted triple play (July 8, 1994), he hit three home runs in one game (June 2, 1995), and hit for the cycle on June 6, 1996.

### **Home Run Oddities**

- George Foster in 1977 was the only player to hit 50+ home runs in the years from 1965 to 1990.
- Brady Anderson's 1996 performance of hitting 50 home runs in 579 at-bats was an outlier for his career performance. In 1995 he hit 16 home runs in 554 at-bats and in 1997 he hit 18 home runs in 590 at-bats. For his entire career he hit over 20 home runs two

other times. Except for his 50 home run season, he never again hit over 24 home runs.

- The Fielders, Cecil and Prince are the only father and son to accomplish 50+ home runs for a season. Cecil hit 51 home runs in 1990 and Prince hit 50 home runs in 2007.
- Mark McGwire, Sammy Sosa and Babe Ruth share the record for most number of seasons hitting 50+ home runs. They all did it for 4 years.
- Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa hit their 50+ home runs in 4 consecutive years. McGwire did it for the years 1996 through 1999 and Sosa did for the years 1998 through 2001.
- Babe Ruth was not only the first player to hit 50+ home runs in 1920 but also the first player to hit 50+ home runs in two consecutive seasons (1920 and 1921).
- Alex Rodriguez was the first shortstop to have a 50+ home run season.
- There have been no 50+ home run hitters who played the positions of second-base, catcher, or pitcher.
- Cecil Fielder was the first pure designated hitter to hit 50+ home runs.
- Of the 25 players who hit 50+ home runs a total of 41 times, players for the New York Yankees accomplished this feat 8 times. Babe Ruth did it 4 times, Mickey Mantle did it 2 times, Roger Maris did it once, and Alex Rodriguez did it once.
- In 2001, Barry Bonds hit 73 home runs. That was the only year he hit 50+ home runs. Henry Aaron never hit 50 home runs.
- The eight seasons from 1995 through 2002 represents the longest consecutive streak with at least one batter hitting 50+ home runs.
- Of all players with at least one season of hitting 50+ home runs, Brady Anderson has the lowest career total of 210 home runs.

**The statistic IBB has only been used since 1955. For that reason all records concerning this statistic will involve only players that were in the major leagues since 1955.**

- Most IBBs for a season: Barry Bonds 120 (NL:SF Giants 2004); Ted Williams 33 (AL:Boston Red Sox 1957) and John Olerud 33 (AL:Toronto Blue Jays 1993).
- Most IBBs for a career: Barry Bonds 688 (NL: Pirates and Giants); George Brett 228 (AL: Kansas City).

- The record for the most IBBs for a season, prior to Barry Bonds, was held by Willie McCovey with a total of 45 in 1969. Bonds broke this record in 2002 with a total of 68 IBBs.
- In the 2004 season, Barry Bonds drew a single season record of 232 base-on-balls. Of those 232 base-on-balls 120 were intentional. In that year Eric Chavez led the American League with just 95 total walks.
- In 1961, Roger Maris hit 61 home runs to break Babe Ruth's record of 60 home runs set in 1927. How many intentional base-on-balls do you think Roger got? The answer is zero. That's what happens when Mickey Mantle bats behind you in the batting order.
- In contrast to Bonds, Mantle highest total of IBBs for a season was 27 in 1957.

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