

TRANSPARENCY ANNEX A

BEST TEAMS METHODOLOGY

Doing a quantitative analysis to evaluate which were the best teams in the twentieth century requires, according to me, looking at a team's achievement, its level of dominance, and the performance of its core players. The following are the factors I consider to be the most important in each of these three critical areas and the methodology I used to best quantify them. I deliberately do not assign greater or lesser importance to any of the three categories because I believe their relative importance is variable according to time (or era) and circumstances. The numerical "final score" for each category and in total is there to inform—not to dictate—my (or your) determination on which were the best teams, in what order.

Methodology for Evaluating a Team's Achievement (Ach)

I measure "achievement" by what a team accomplished over a period of no less than five years, with greatest emphasis on accomplishment during the regular season rather than post-season success. *Achievement is weighted according to accomplishment:*

1st place (x 3)	2nd place (x 2)	3rd place (x 1)	World Series (x 1)	Score
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1. Finishing in first place counts for 3 points, according to my methodology; finishing second for 2 points; and finishing third for 1 point. A team gets no credit for finishing lower than third place.
2. Winning the World Series counts for 1 point.
3. For teams playing after the 1969 advent of divisional alignments in both leagues:

1st place (x 3)
+ pennants (x 1)
+ best record in league (x .5)

I add to the first place score 1 point for winning the league pennant and half-a-point (.5) for having the best record in the league. I do not grant any of those extra points for teams who finished first prior to 1969 because, by definition, finishing first in a unitary league meant having the best record in the league, which meant winning the pennant; I believe that division-winning teams since divisional alignment deserve additional credit for winning the pennant and/or having the league’s best record. I do not score third-place finishes since divisional alignment for teams whose standing in consolidated 12- or 14-team league standings was lower than fifth place, *unless* they finished within three games of the division winner.

4. The “final score” for **Achievement** is total points (score in the right column), divided by the number of seasons—at least five—under consideration for the team, multiplied by 10 in order to deal with double-digit numbers.

Methodology for Evaluating a Team’s Dominance (Dom)

I measure “dominance” according to four *equally weighted* factors:

100 Wins	8 Games Ahead	# 1 / Runs Scored	# 1 / Fewest Runs Allowed	Score
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1. Number of times winning 100 or more games + number of times finishing first by a margin of eight games or more + number of times leading the league in runs scored + number of times leading the league in fewest runs allowed.
2. The “final score” for **Dominance** is total points (score in the right column), divided by the number of years under consideration for the team, times four (for each dominance factor), multiplied by 100 in order, once again, to deal with double-digit numbers. Multiplying the number of seasons by each dominance factor is desirable because, theoretically, a team could win 100 games, win blowout pennant races, and lead the league in runs scored and fewest runs allowed each year under consideration.

Methodology for Evaluating a Team’s Players (Play)

This measure has three parts to take account of the performance of a team’s core regular position players and pitchers in both contemporary and historical context:

CORE REGULARS	WAR (yrs)	BEST at POSITION	Decade (10 yrs)	1st ½ 20th C	20th C +
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1. I begin by identifying the **core regulars**—position players in the daily starting line-up, starting pitchers, and ace relievers or closers—who were on the team *for at least half the years being considered*. For a team with a five-season run, this means that

each core player must have been a regular on that team for at least three of those years. (Lou Gehrig is not counted as a core regular on the 1936 to 1942 New York Yankees, for example, because he was their first baseman in only the first three of those seven years—less than half the years under consideration—before crippling illness ended his career.)

2. Dates after the name of each core regular are inclusive for the number of consecutive years with the team—including seasons both before and after the years under consideration—as a regular position player, starting pitcher, or reliever. *They must have been a regular on the team for at least four years, three of which were during the years under consideration.* Minus years (for example, -1), if any, are noted for players missing all or most of any of the seasons under consideration for his team because of injury, military service, or some other reason. Any lost seasons before or after those years are *not* noted in the table because they are not relevant to the years under consideration for his team. This same standard applies to years listed for **best at position, decade, 1st ½ C or 2nd ½ C, and 20th C +.**
3. **Part one** of the **Players** methodology—**WAR**—provides the total **Wins Above Replacement** each core regular contributed to his team during the years being considered. WAR is a metric developed by Sean Smith of *Baseball Projection.com* that presents the number of wins the player added to his team above what a replacement-level player from Triple-A, or shuttling between the major leagues and Triple-A, would contribute. The cumulative WAR for the team's entire roster is also included for the years under consideration.
4. The cumulative WAR for the team's core players *for the seasons under consideration* is then represented as a percentage of the cumulative WAR for the team's entire roster for those years. This percentage establishes the relative importance of the core players to their team's success for the years under consideration. *The average annual WAR for the team as whole, plus the WAR of the team's core regulars for the years under consideration as a percentage of the team's WAR, divided by 10 in order to obtain a single digit number (and fraction) results in the **baseline number** for the **Players** part of my methodology.*
5. **Part two** of the **Players** methodology—**Best at Position**—identifies the team's core regulars who were, in *contemporary* context, the *best in the league at their positions*, according to me, *for at least five consecutive years (with occasional allowance for only four), including at least half the years* for which his team is being considered. Being the best at his position for five or more consecutive years is inclusive of the time period and does not necessarily mean he was the best each and every year.
6. The listed dates for which I consider a player to have been the best at his position are for the entire time he was the best, including any years with other teams. (For example, for the 1910-14 Philadelphia Athletics, although second baseman Eddie Collins played for Philadelphia only from 1909 to 1914, I acknowledge that he was the best at his position in the American League from 1909 all the way to 1926.) At any given time across the twentieth century there are 15 players who are the best at their position for five (rarely, four) or more consecutive years: a catcher, one for each of the four infield positions, three outfielders without regard to left, center, or right, a multi-position regular (MPR) who played more than one position for the years in

question, five starting pitchers, and an ace reliever. I also acknowledge as significant others (“s/o”) outstanding players who were not the best at their position because someone else was better. See **Transparency Annex B** for how I determined the best players at each position in both leagues through the twentieth century (and beyond).

7. *The baseline number for **Best at Position** is the percentage of core regulars who were the best in the league at their position for a majority of their team’s years under consideration, multiplied by 10 to obtain a single-digit number (and fraction). Players who are listed as “significant others (s/o)” at their position count for a half-point.*
8. **Part three** of the **Players** methodology is weighted according to the team’s players’ *historical legacy based on their best consecutive years—as informed by WAR—for the period under consideration: 1 point is awarded for each player who was one of the league’s 10 best position players, one of the 5 best starting pitchers, or the best relief pitcher in the surrounding **Decade**; 2 points for each player who was one of his league’s 25 best position players, 15 best starting pitchers, or 3 best relief pitchers in the first half-century (1st ½ C), 1901-1950, or one of his league’s 30 best position players, 18 best starting pitchers, or 5 best relief pitchers in the second half-century (2nd ½ C), 1951-2000; and 3 points for each player who was one of his league’s 50 best position players, 30 best starting pitchers, or 6 best relief pitchers since the start of the twentieth century (20th C +), 1901-2010. (I selected a greater number of players for the best position players, starting pitchers, and relievers in the second half-century because expansion beginning in 1961 significantly increased the number of major leaguers.) *The numbers are added cumulatively, so a player with a twentieth century-plus (20th C +) legacy earns his team 6 points. See **Transparency Annex C** for how I determined each league’s best players for each half-century and from the start of the twentieth century to date.**
9. A **decade** is defined by *the ten-year period within which the team had its run of achievement.* (For example, the “decade” during which the 1906-10 Chicago Cubs had their five-year run of achievement is counted from 1904 to 1913.)
10. Whether for the decade, half-century, full century, or century-plus *the player’s best consecutive years must include at least half of the years for which his team is being considered.* For example, first baseman Frank Chance of the 1906-10 Chicago Cubs has a century-plus legacy as one of the 50 best National League players since the start of the twentieth century, according to me based on WAR, but is not counted as having either a half-century or full-century legacy with this team because his best consecutive years that earned him that legacy, based on wins above replacement, were 1903 to 1907, only two of which—less than half—were for the 1906-10 Cubs. Players like Chance, who have an historical legacy with the team, *but not for the seasons under consideration*, are acknowledged by (^) in the half-century or full century column. Exceptions are made, however, for players whose best consecutive seasons did not cover half of the seasons under consideration if his performance based on WAR for at least half of those years would still have given him a half-century or century-plus legacy.
11. *The “final score” for **Players** is obtained by adding the score for the team’s core regulars who were best in the league at their positions, and the score for the team’s*

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core players with a decade, half-century, or century-plus historical legacy, to the baseline number derived from wins above replacement for both all the players on the team during the years under consideration and for the team's core regulars.

12. The **Achievement**, **Dominance**, and **Players** scores are added without weighting relative to each other to achieve a total score for the team. Once again, the final score is to inform—not dictate—my (or your) final rankings of the best teams in each league during the twentieth century.