

## *American League's Best Teams*

### *Chapter Four*

#### **The 1926-32 New York Yankees vs. The 1928-32 Philadelphia Athletics: Which Was the AL's New Best Team?**

Babe Ruth's very best years, according to the wins above replacement (WAR) metric, might have been in the first half of the 'twenties, but the years he's best remembered for are those when he teamed with Lou Gehrig to form the most formidable three-four punch in any line-up in baseball history; the 60 home runs he hit in 1927; and his tremendous World Series performances in 1926 (four home runs in a losing cause as he was thrown out trying to steal with Gehrig waiting on deck for the last out of the World Series), 1927 (two home runs, 7 RBI, and a .400 average when the Yankees dismembered the Pirates in four straight), 1928 (three homers and a .625 batting average as the Yankees dismantled the Cardinals in four straight), and 1932 (two home runs, including his famous "called shot," as the Yankees positively crushed the Cubs in four straight). Ruth and Gehrig teamed together for ten years, 1925 to 1934, but despite power production unmatched in history by any other dynamic duo, they led the Yankees to only four pennants. The Ruth and Gehrig Yankees won three consecutive pennants from 1926 to 1928, and a fourth in seven years in 1932.

The 1927 New York Yankees were mythologized (certainly when I was growing up) as the greatest team there ever was and probably would ever be. This was the team that spent every day of the season in first place, won 110 games, took the pennant by 19 games, outscored their opposition by 376 runs (that's 2.4 runs a game more than the other team), and was said to so intimidate the Pirates during batting practice before Game 1 in Pittsburgh that their quick sweep in the World Series was a foregone conclusion, or any other words you might choose to connote inevitability. Now, there's been some revisionist thinking about that grandiose statement in recent decades, especially with the advent of sabermetric analysis, but (by and large) that crown of achievement—the 1927 Yankees as the greatest team ever—even if jarred, has not been knocked off that Ruthian shock of hair on their head.

I'm not going to say one way or the other whether I think the 1927 Yankees were the greatest team in history. I'm looking at them as part of the **1926 to 1932 New York Yankees** winners of four pennants and three World Series in seven years, and what their place is among the best American League teams of the twentieth century. Being the greatest team in history for one season is not as meaningful for this analysis as how good they were over several years—specifically, at least five consecutive years.

The 1926-32 Yankees' place in history, however, must be matched against the contemporary **1928 to 1932 Philadelphia Athletics**, whose three consecutive pennants from 1929 to 1931 interrupted and probably short-changed the Ruth-Gehrig Yankee dynasty. Indeed, one would be misguided to think that Ruth and Gehrig should have won more than the four pennants they did together, so great were they and their team, because the rival Philadelphians were a team with its own luminescent stars of baseball's historical firmament—notably the muscular Jimmie Foxx, Al Simmons, Mickey Cochrane, and Lefty Grove. It was no disgrace for the Ruth-Gehrig Yankees not to win more often when those guys were their contemporaries on the Athletics. And so, the questions to answer here are: which was the better team, and was that team the best in the American League through the first third of the twentieth century?

The achievements of the two teams were comparable. Each won three consecutive pennants, and the 1926-32 Yankees won four AL titles in all. The Athletics won two World Series, the Yankees won three. Although the two clubs had comparable “dominance” scores, according to my methodology, I am prepared to argue that the 1928-32 Philadelphia Athletics were the more dominant team. The Athletics won more than 100 games in all three of their consecutive pennants and were never challenged after mid-summer, winning decisively by margins of 18 games in 1929, eight in 1930, and 13½ games in 1931. In 1929 and 1931, the Athletics were in complete command by June, not to be seriously threatened thereafter. In 1930, it took a bit longer—not until late July.

The 1926-32 Yankees also won 100 or more games three times—in 1927, 1928, and 1932—but won the American League championship decisively only twice: in 1927 (by the aforementioned 19 games) and in 1932 (by 13) over Philadelphia. In their two other pennants, the Yankees finished first by three games over the second-place Indians in 1926 and by only 2½ over the late-charging Athletics in 1928, and in both those years, they allowed large leads to fade away. In 1926, the Yankees had a 10-game lead on August 23, and led by eight as late as September 9, before holding on to win the pennant, possibly only by virtue of the big lead they built up early in the season. The 1926 Yankees had a losing record in the final two months of the season, going 25-29 in August and September. And in 1928, the Yankees were in command by 13½ games on July 1, only to lose the entire lead and find themselves a half game behind Philadelphia on September 9, the start of a four-game series against the Athletics. The Yankees took three of those four games to move into first place for good. And in the three following seasons when Philadelphia was coming home first, the Yankees were playing catch up from far behind early on and never challenged the Athletics for the pennant. And in 1930, they didn't even finish second; they came in third.

With Cochrane, Simmons, and Foxx at the heart of their line-up, the Philadelphia Athletics were a dangerous team. Thirty-five percent of their 505 victories during the five years from 1928 to 1932 were by blowout margins of five runs or more, but they did not once lead the league in scoring because, well, because they were *not* the New York Yankees—the Bronx

Bombers with the fabled Murderer's Row. Philadelphia finished second in the league in runs scored in four of the five years of their run, and scored the third-most runs in 1931 when they won the pennant with their most victories (107).

It was the New York Yankees who dominated all of baseball offensively, leading not just the AL but both major leagues in runs scored six of the seven years between 1926 and 1932. (The Ruth-Gehrig Yankees also led the league in scoring in 1933, when they finished in second place to Washington, seven games behind.) Even when the Yankees finished third in scoring in 1929—the year Philadelphia displaced New York at the top of the American League, the Yankees far behind—they had only 27 fewer runs than the Tigers, who led the league in runs despite finishing in sixth place, and only two fewer than the Athletics. In the six years they led the league in scoring, the Yankees did so by an average margin of 92 runs more than the second best team in runs scored. In 1930, the Yankees resumed their place as the team scoring more runs than anybody else and, moreover, became the first team in modern baseball history (or the first since 1897, if you prefer) to score more than 1,000 runs, when they touched the plate 1,062 times—the first of three consecutive 1,000-run seasons.

The Yankees led the league in home runs every year of this run except 1932, when the Athletics had 172 homers to their 160. (Interestingly, the Ruth-Gehrig Yankees from 1925 to 1934 were not perennial major league leaders in home runs. The Giants in 1925, Phillies in 1929, and Cubs in 1930 of the National League all hit more home runs than the Yankees. Indicative of their clout, the 1926-32 Yankees won 38 percent of their total 677 victories over those seven seasons by blowout margins—including an astonishing 44 of their 94 victories (47 percent) in 1931, a year in which they finished 13½ games behind the Athletics *despite* outscoring them for the season by 209 runs. And why would that be?—

—Because the Athletics had far superior pitching and defense than the Yankees. Indeed, pitching—along with their complete command of the league in winning the three straight pennants from 1929 to 1931—makes the difference for me in saying the 1928-32 Athletics were a more dominant team than the 1926-32 Yankees. The Athletics led the league in fewest runs allowed three times (1928, 1929, and 1931), were second in 1930, and fourth in 1932 when they finished second in the standings, but far behind the Yankees. With Lefty Grove and George Earnshaw on the mound, who were first and second in the American League in strikeouts in each of their pennant-winning seasons, the Athletics were also the premier power-pitching team in baseball. Defensively, Philadelphia led the league in defensive efficiency ratio (making outs on balls put into play) in three of the five years between 1928 and 1932, and were never worse than third best in the league in that category.

During this five-year period, Grove made a strong case for having the best five-year stretch of any pitcher ever by winning 128 games while losing only 33 (that's a .795 winning percentage) and leading the league in ERA from 1929 through 1932—and this in the peak years of the hitters' era. Earnshaw was 67-28 in the three pennant-winning seasons (for a .705 winning percentage), before beginning a relatively quick burnout at age 32 in 1932 when he went 19-13. Rube Walberg was the third main man on the staff, even if not in Earnshaw's or especially Grove's class. Although the concept of dedicated relief pitchers was in its infancy at the time, the Athletics had Eddie Rommel (himself a formidable starter for most of the 1920s) pitching very well mostly in relief during these years, although it was Grove more often than not who was the "closer"—a term still about a half-century away from being coined—in addition to being the "ace" starter.

The Yankees' pitching staff, meanwhile, was in transition from Waite Hoyt and Herb Pennock, their ace starters for three consecutive pennants from 1926 to 1928 and two of the best pitchers in the American League those three years, to Red Ruffing and Lefty Gomez, who were emerging by the pennant-winning year of 1932 as the foundation of what would prove to be an excellent staff later in the 1930s. The 1926-32 Yankees led the league in fewest runs allowed only once (in the mythologized year of 1927), surrendered the second fewest in 1928 and 1932, and the third fewest in 1926 and 1931. They were fourth in 1929 and seventh in 1930. Unlike the 1928-32 Athletics, the 1926-32 Yankees' pitchers had less solid defense behind them. New York led the league in defensive efficiency only in their historic 1927 season, but was typically only third or fourth most of the other years; they were fifth in 1930, with a defensive efficiency ratio worse than the league average.

Comparing the two teams specifically for the years 1928 to 1932, while the Yankees outscored the Athletics by an average of 81 runs per season, Philadelphia outpaced New York in outscoring *their game-opponents* by an average of 232 runs annually to the Yankees' 216-run annual margin. Throw in the 1926 and 1927 seasons, and the 1926-32 Yankees scored an average of 227 runs more than their game-opponents, still not quite as productive as the 1928-32 Athletics. (The 1906-10 Chicago Cubs, for further comparison, outscored their opposition by an average of 226 runs during their five-year run, and that was in the dead ball era, making the magnitude of their achievement seem even greater.) I do not mean to suggest that this Yankee team was not crushing its opponents, only that the 1928-32 Athletics' superior pitching gave them a greater differential between runs scored and runs allowed than the 1926-32 Yankees.

So far, according to me, the two teams were comparable in terms of achievement, and the 1928-32 Athletics marginally more dominant than the 1926-32 Yankees because of their three blowout pennants and much better pitching. What settles it for me that Athletics were a better team than the Yankees, and in fact the best team in the American League through the first third of the twentieth century, was the significant difference in their relative players score, according to my methodology.

Three core regulars of the 1926-32 Yankees were the best in the league at their position during all or most of this seven-year run—Gehrig at first base, Tony Lazzeri at second, and Ruth in the outfield—and those three, plus center fielder Earle Combs, were among the AL's 10 best position players in the surrounding decade. None of the Yankees' pitchers were among the five best in the league for the majority of the seven years or in the surrounding decade, but I count both Hoyt and Pennock as "significant others" on the pitching side because both were among the league's five best starters for at least five years, including the three consecutive pennants New York won from 1926 to 1928. The right-hander Hoyt went 22-7 and 23-7 in 1927 and 1928, and southpaw Pennock was 23-11, 19-8, and 17-6 in the three years. Those were the last of the best seasons by either in a Yankee uniform. In 1929, the Yankees introduced catcher Bill Dickey to their equation. While he immediately established himself as one of the best catchers in baseball, it would not be until the mid-1930s that Dickey supplanted Mickey Cochrane as the best catcher in the league. Ruth and Gehrig were the only players on this Yankee team with a century-plus legacy based on their best consecutive years including 1926 to 1932. Dickey also had a century-plus legacy for the Yankees, but not for this team.

All told, these Yankees were a very impressive team, but—

—The 1928-32 Philadelphia Athletics were an even more impressive team when you consider their players. They had four (to the Yankees' three) who were the best at their position for all or the majority of their run—Cochrane behind the plate, Foxx at first, left fielder Simmons as one of three outfielders, and Lefty Grove, the most dominant pitcher of his time—all of whom also have century-plus legacies in the American League. A word here about Jimmie Foxx and Lou Gehrig at first base. They are 1-B to 1-A, according to me, which is to say that, while I would take Gehrig as the league's best all-around first baseman during this time, Foxx was such a great player in his own right that it would be unreasonable not to consider him as also the best at his position.

In addition to their four players with twentieth century legacies, Grove's fellow starting pitcher George Earnshaw rates as one of the five best American League pitchers in the surrounding decade (1925-34). This obviously requires explanation since I do not count Earnshaw as one of the league's five best pitchers in the 1928 to 1932 window for the team. The reason is that my criteria for best at any position, including pitchers, require the player be considered such over a minimum five-year period. The starting pitchers whose five or more consecutive years as among the five best in the league at the time overlap 1928 to 1932 include Grove and Alvin "General" Crowder for all five years, Wes Ferrell and Firpo Marberry beginning in 1929 (succeeding Hoyt and Pennock), and Ted Lyons through 1930 succeeded by the Lefty Gomez in 1931. Earnshaw won more than 20 games in each of Philadelphia's pennant-winning years and 19 in 1932, but did not have a fifth year on either end that was good enough to give him five consecutive seasons better than the aforementioned pitchers. And even with his 19 victories against 13 losses in 1932, Earnshaw's earned run average was quite high at 4.77, his ERA+ was below the league average, and his player value was a relatively unimpressive 1.5 wins above replacement, which ironically—because of his three very good years from 1929 to 1931—still places him as fifth best in the league in the surrounding 1925 to 1934 decade.

To conclude the debate, once again I would have to say that, according to me, any team that has Grove, Cochrane, Foxx, and Simmons on its roster and accomplished what it did—three straight pennants, all by decisive margins, in five years against a powerful Yankee team as their principal rival—beats out the Yankees for the years under consideration, notwithstanding Ruth and Gehrig (not to mention Lazzeri, Combs, and Dickey). It may be wrong to say so, and this may seem a heretical notion because the 1927 Yankees are an iconic team—the very definition of "the best"—and given that Philadelphia's three straight blow-out pennants are largely forgotten (except perhaps in the collective historical memory of the City of Brotherly Love), but I believe that Connie Mack's second great Athletics team, and not the 1926-32 Yankees, was the best team in American League history through the first third of the twentieth century—

—Which, of course, begs the question: was Connie Mack's *first* great Philadelphia team better than the 1926-32 Yankees of Ruth and Gehrig (and Lazzeri, Combs, and Dickey)?

While it's hard to go against Ruth and Gehrig, the **1910-14 Philadelphia Athletics** won four pennants in five years, three by 8½ games or more, and were not really seriously challenged in the pennant they won by *only* 6½ games. They, like the 1926-32 Yankees, also won three of the four World Series they played. According to my methodology, Mack's first

## 1926-32 New York Yankees and 1928-32 Philadelphia Athletics

great team—primarily on the strength of its relative dominance of the league—just misses equaling the total best teams score for Mack’s second great team. The 1910-14 Athletics, however, did not have to contend, *as did the 1928-32 Athletics*, with a competitive rival as imposing as the Yankees. Conversely, while Mack’s 1910-14 Athletics had a significantly higher overall best teams score than the 1926-32 Yankees, they did not have as challenging competition *as the Yankees did* with the later Mack team. The 1910-14 Athletics had better balance between offense and pitching than the 1926-32 Yankees—whose strength was overwhelmingly their batting order—which helped contribute to them having a higher dominance score relative to their time than the Yankees. The 1910-14 Athletics led the league in runs scored three times and were second twice. They also led the league twice in fewest runs allowed. And Mack’s earlier great Philadelphia team had two players of their own with century-plus legacies (Eddie Collins and Home Run Baker) and five of their core regulars as the best at their positions, including two pitchers (Plank and Bender), giving them an appreciably higher players score.

On the other (more dominant?) hand, however, the 1926-32 Yankees would surely have won more pennants were it not for the 1928-32 Athletics. Moreover, not to take anything away from the 1910-14 Athletics’ dominance of the league, there were only four other teams during those five years with at least 90 victories (and none but the A’s won that many in 1910 or 1911), against which Philadelphia played only 11 percent of their games, winning only one more than they lost at 43-42. The 1926-32 Yankees not only faced off against the Athletics who won at least 91 games every year from 1927 to 1932, but also a very competitive Washington Senators team that won at least 92 games every year from 1930 to 1932. In total, these Yankees played 18 percent of their games against 90-win competition, with a winning record of 102-96 (.515). This being one of the rare times in history when two historically great teams were direct contemporary rivals, I am very inclined to argue that the much tougher competitive environment faced by the 1926-32 Yankees makes the team of Ruth and Gehrig better than that of Collins and Baker—

—Except that the 1910-14 Athletics have the 1926-32 Yankees beat in all three parts of my methodological approach for helping to determine the best teams. Ultimately, it comes down to pitching for me; both teams were offensively imposing in their time, but the 1910-14 Philadelphia Athletics had better pitching, so I consider them to have been the better team. That’s according to me; you may feel differently.

## 5 BEST AMERICAN LEAGUE TEAMS, 1901-1933

|  | P-WS         | W - L %             | Ach       | Dom       | Play      | Total      |
|--|--------------|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| <b>Philadelphia Athletics, 1928-32</b> | <b>3 – 2</b> | <b>505-258 .662</b> | <b>30</b> | <b>45</b> | <b>39</b> | <b>114</b> |
| Philadelphia Athletics, 1910-14        | 4 – 3        | 488-270 .644        | 32        | 50        | 31        | 113        |
| <b>New York Yankees, 1926-32</b>       | <b>4 – 3</b> | <b>677-400 .629</b> | <b>29</b> | <b>43</b> | <b>27</b> | <b>99</b>  |
| Boston Red Sox, 1912-18                | 4 – 4        | 632-409 .607        | 29        | 32        | 21        | 82         |
| Chicago White Sox, 1916-20             | 2 – 1        | 430-296 .592        | 22        | 20        | 24        | 66         |

P = Pennant    WS = World Series    Ach = Achievement Score  
 Dom = Dominance Factors Score    Play = Players Score    Total = Total Score

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1926-32 New York Yankees and 1928-32 Philadelphia Athletics

Just as Connie Mack broke up the 1910-14 Philadelphia Athletics team for economic reasons in the midst of a grave recession, so too the Great Depression compelled him to break up his even better 1928-32 team in what would be the beginning of a very long end—more than two decades—for American League baseball in the City of Brotherly Love. This time, however, the breakup was less precipitous, and also less immediately calamitous. Of the four Hall of Famers who were the centerpiece of this team, Al Simmons was gone by 1933; Mickey Cochrane and Lefty Grove by 1934; and Jimmie Foxx remained three more years in Philadelphia before leaving in 1936. Of the other core regulars, Jimmy Dykes and Mule Haas were gone by 1933; Max Bishop, George Earnshaw, and Rube Walberg by 1934; and Bing Miller by 1935. (Bishop and Walberg were part of the deal that sent Grove to Boston.) Philadelphia dropped to third in 1933 and fifth in 1934 before finding a home in the American League basement for seven of the next nine years.

Unlike the core players of the 1910-14 Athletics, most who were still in the prime of their careers, the foundation players on the 1928-32 Athletics were all on, or very close to, the downside of their careers when Connie Mack said to them good-bye and good luck. Grove and Foxx played for eight and six years with the Boston Red Sox after they were traded away for bit players and (primarily) big money, and both had some excellent years with their new team, but no stretch of five consecutive years that would have given them the century legacies they earned in their time with the Philadelphia Athletics.

The New York Yankees, meanwhile, were financially on a more sound footing throughout the Depression years, shedding only those players they no longer needed or wanted. By 1935, that included the Babe himself, despite his iconic status in New York City. With excellent scouts, one of baseball's premier minor league systems, and a trademark commitment to excellence, the Yankees were on the threshold of being the best they ever were.

## TRANSPARENCY ANNEX

### NEW YORK YANKEES, 1926-1932

4 Pennants (1926, 1927, 1928, 1932)  
 3 World Series Wins (1927, 1928, 1932)

#### ACHIEVEMENT

| 1 <sup>st</sup> place (x 3) | 2 <sup>nd</sup> place (x 2) | 3 <sup>rd</sup> place (x 1) | World Series (x 1) | Score |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|-------|
| 4 x 3 = 12                  | 2 x 2 = 4                   | 1 x 1 = 1                   | 3 x 1 = 3          | 20    |

**ACHIEVEMENT SCORE** = 20 / 7 years x 10 = **29**

#### DOMINANCE

| 100 Wins | 8 Games Ahead | AL1/Runs Scored | AL1/Fewest Runs Allowed | Score |
|----------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-------|
| 3        | 2             | 6               | 1                       | 12    |

**DOMINANCE SCORE** = 12 / 28 (4 x 7 seasons) x 100 = **43**

#### PLAYERS

| CORE REGULARS  | WAR 1926-32             | BEST at POSITION            | Decade 1925-34    | 1 <sup>st</sup> 1/2 C | 20 <sup>th</sup> C + |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1B Lou Gehrig, 1925-38                                 | 65.0                    | 1926-37                     | 1926-34           | yes                   | yes                  |
| 2B Tony Lazzeri, 1926-37                               | 32.0                    | 1927-32                     | 1927-32           | no                    |                      |
| SS Mark Koenig, 1926-29                                | 5.9                     | no                          | no                |                       |                      |
| LF Bob Meusel, 1920-29                                 | 7.5                     | no                          | no                |                       |                      |
| CF Earle Combs, 1925-33                                | 35.0                    | s/o                         | 1927-32           | no                    |                      |
| RF Babe Ruth, 1920-34                                  | 75.1                    | 1920-33                     | 1926-34           | yes                   | yes                  |
| C Bill Dickey, 1929-33                                 | 12.8                    | no                          | no                | ^                     | ^                    |
| P Waite Hoyt, 1921-29                                  | 11.3                    | (‘21-28) s/o                | no                |                       |                      |
| P Herb Pennock, 1923-33                                | 12.1                    | (‘23-28) s/o                | no                |                       |                      |
| P George Pipgras, 1927-32                              | 9.2                     | no                          | no                |                       |                      |
| <b>TEAM WAR, 1926-32 = 341.8</b>                       | 265.9                   |                             |                   |                       |                      |
| Core WAR= 77.8 % of Team<br>48.8 Av. Team WAR + 77.8 % | 86.8 / 10<br><b>8.7</b> | 4.5 / 10 x 10<br><b>4.5</b> | 4 x 1<br><b>4</b> | 2 x 2<br><b>4</b>     | 2 x 3<br><b>6</b>    |

^ Dickey has century-plus legacy for best consecutive years of 1933 to 1939.

**PLAYERS SCORE** = 8.7 (Base WAR) + 4.5 (Best at Position) + 14 (AL Best) = **27.2**

**PHILADELPHIA ATHLETICS, 1928-32**

3 Pennants (1929, 1930, 1931)  
 2 World Series Wins (1929, 1930)

**ACHIEVEMENT**

| 1 <sup>st</sup> place (x 3) | 2 <sup>nd</sup> place (x 2) | 3 <sup>rd</sup> place (x 1) | World Series (x 1) | Score |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|-------|
| 3 x 3 = 9                   | 2 x 2 = 4                   | 0                           | 2 x 1 = 2          | 15    |

**ACHIEVEMENT SCORE** = 15 / 5 years x 10 = **30**

**DOMINANCE**

| 100 Wins | 8 Games Ahead | AL1/Runs Scored | AL1/Fewest Runs Allowed | Score |
|----------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-------|
| 3        | 3             | 0               | 3                       | 9     |

**DOMINANCE SCORE** = 9 / 20 (4 x 5 seasons) x 100 = **45**

**PLAYERS**

| CORE REGULARS  | WAR 1928-32             | BEST at POSITION          | Decade 1925-34    | 1 <sup>st</sup> ½ C | 20 <sup>th</sup> C + |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1B Jimmie Foxx, 1929-35                                | 29.7                    | 1929-41                   | 1929-34           | yes                 | yes                  |
| 2B Max Bishop, 1925-33                                 | 21.0                    | no                        | no                |                     |                      |
| LF Al Simmons, 1924-32                                 | 31.3                    | 1928-35                   | 1927-31           | yes                 | yes                  |
| CF Mule Haas, 1928-32                                  | 9.0                     | no                        | no                |                     |                      |
| RF Bing Miller, 1928-32                                | 11.2                    | no                        | no                |                     |                      |
| 2B/3B Jimmy Dykes, 1920-32                             | 10.7                    | no                        | no                |                     |                      |
| C Mickey Cochrane, 1925-33                             | 24.7                    | 1925-35                   | 1929-33           | yes                 | yes                  |
| P Lefty Grove, 1925-33                                 | 40.1                    | 1926-40                   | 1926-33           | yes                 | yes                  |
| P George Earnshaw, 1928-32                             | 16.5                    | s/o                       | 1928-32           |                     |                      |
| P Rube Walberg, 1925-33                                | 17.3                    | no                        | no                |                     |                      |
| RP Eddie Rommel, 1927-31 *                             | 9.8                     | s/o                       | no                |                     |                      |
| <b>TEAM WAR, 1928-32 = 250.1</b>                       | 221.3                   |                           |                   |                     |                      |
| Core WAR= 88.5 % of Team<br>50.0 Av. Team WAR + 88.5 % | 94.3 / 10<br><b>9.4</b> | 5 / 11 x 10<br><b>4.5</b> | 5 x 1<br><b>5</b> | 4 x 2<br><b>8</b>   | 4 x 3<br><b>12</b>   |

\* Eddie Rommel was a starting pitcher for the Athletics from 1920 to 1926.

**PLAYERS SCORE** = 9.4 (Base WAR) + 4.5 (Best at Position) + 25 (AL Best) = **38.9**

**BEST PLAYERS IN SURROUNDING DECADE**

(based on best consecutive years, informed by wins above replacement)

| 1926-32 YANKEES<br>and<br>1928-32 ATHLETICS |  |
|---|--|
|   | <b>10 BEST AL POSITION PLAYERS,<br/>1925-34</b>        |
|   | <i>Babe Ruth, OF, 1926-34, NY</i>                      |
|   | <i>Lou Gehrig, 1B, 1926-34, NY</i>                     |
|   | <i>Jimmie Foxx, 1B, 1929-34, Phil</i>                  |
|   | <i>Mickey Cochrane, C, 1929-33, Phil</i>               |
|   | <i>Al Simmons, OF, 1927-31, Phil</i>                   |
|   | <i>Charlie Gehringer, 2B, 1929-34</i>                  |
|   | <i>Joe Cronin, SS, 1930-34</i>                         |
|   | <i>Goose Goslin, OF, 1925-31</i>                       |
|   | <i>Earle Combs, OF, 1927-32, NY</i>                    |
|   | <i>Tony Lazzeri, 2B, 1927-32, NY</i>                   |
|   | <b>5 BEST AL PITCHERS + BEST<br/>RELIEVER, 1925-34</b> |
|   | <i>Lefty Grove, 1926-33, Phil</i>                      |
|   | <i>Wes Ferrell, 1929-34</i>                            |
|   | <i>Ted Lyons, 1925-30</i>                              |
|   | <i>Firpo Marberry, SP/RP, 1929-33</i>                  |
|   | <i>George Earnshaw, 1928-32, Phil</i>                  |
|   | <i>Firpo Marberry, RP, 1925-29</i>                     |

**BEST AT POSITION**

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 1B | (16) Sisler~-----→Gehrig-----→<br>Foxx-----→(41)             |
| 2B | (09) E.Collins-----→Lazzeri-----→Gehringer-----→             |
| SS | Sewell-----→Cronin-----→Appling-----→(42)                    |
| 3B | Kamm-----→Sewell-----→Clift-----→(40)                        |
| OF | (20) Ruth-----→B.Johnson-----→                               |
| OF | Heilmann-----→Simmons-----→DiMaggio--→(51)                   |
| OF | Goslin-----→Averill-----→                                    |
| MP | (20) Dykes, IF-----→McManus, IF-----→Travis, SS/3B-----→(41) |
| C  | (19) Schang----→Cochrane-----→Dickey-----→(42)               |
| P  | (08) W.Johnson----→Grove-----→(40)                           |
| P  | (19) Shocker--→Lyons-----→Gomez-----→                        |
| P  | Hoyt-----→Ferrell-----→Feller--→(48)                         |
| P  | Rommel-----→Crowder-----→Ruffing-----→(41)                   |
| P  | Pennock-----→Marberry-----→Bridges-----→(43)                 |
| RP | Marberry-----→Murphy---→(41)                                 |
|    | 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39     |