

National League's Best Teams

Chapter One

The 1906-10 Chicago Cubs: Setting a Very High Bar for NL Team of Century

Three franchises—the Pittsburgh Pirates, New York Giants, and Chicago Cubs—sequentially, with some overlap, dominated the National League in the first decade of the century, winning all of the league's pennants. Pittsburgh and Chicago each won four, New York won two. In 1908, the three teams fought a pennant race for the ages—maybe the greatest ever—with the Cubs winning and then going on to win their second (and last) World Series to date, and the Giants and Pirates each finishing one game back, tied for second place. Pittsburgh, New York, and Chicago were each dominant for a part of the decade, but it was the Chicago Cubs from 1906 to 1910 that so dominated the league they set the standard against which all great teams would be measured, certainly in the National League. And a very high standard it was—

- Winning 116 games and posting the highest season winning percentage of the twentieth century (at 116-36, that's .763) in 1906 while finishing 20 games ahead of the second-place Giants—coming off back-to-back pennants—who won 96 of their own. The 1906 Cubs moved into first place for good on May 9, but were virtually unbeatable the last two months of the season. From the beginning of August until the season ended on October 7, the Cubs won 50 games and lost only eight, running off winning streaks of 11, 14, and 12 games. Their longest losing streak of the year was three games in May. The last time they lost back-to-back games (before the World Series) was on July 23 and 24.
- Winning 107 games and finishing 17 games out front of second-place Pittsburgh (which won 91 games) in 1907. The Cubs took first for good on May 28, and already held an insurmountable 11½-game lead on July 4.

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- Winning 99 games and the pennant by one game, as already noted, in 1908. August ended with the Cubs, Giants, and Pirates separated by a mere half-game, Chicago on top. Despite winning 14 of their first 20 games in September, the Cubs found themselves in second place, $4\frac{1}{2}$ games behind the Giants, on the eighteenth. With only 16 games remaining, their deficit seemed difficult enough to overcome that even firebrand second baseman Johnny Evers was thinking their chances of winning a third straight pennant were effectively over. Undaunted, and helped by Fred Merkle's rookie "boner" of failing to touch second base on a presumed-game winning hit, the Cubs won 14 of their last 16 games to eke out the pennant.
- Winning 104 games and finishing 13 games ahead of second-place, 91-win New York in 1910. The Cubs went into first place for good on May 24 and were up by 10 games over the Giants by the end of August. The 1910 Cubs were also the inspiration for that greatest of American poems, according to me, the Franklin Pierce Adams' ode to that "trio of bear cubs"—Tinker-to-Evers-to-Chance—suitably entitled, "Baseball's Sad Lexicon," it being printed in the *New York Evening Mail* on July 10, when the Giants were in Chicago, trailing the Cubs by only $1\frac{1}{2}$ games, but with the writing perhaps apparent on the wall. The Giants won that day to close to within half-a-game, but their loss to the Cubs the next day was the first of five straight defeats, and nine losses in 12 games, that effectively finished them for the season and allowed the Chicago Cubs to cruise thereafter to their fourth pennant in five years. (You may have gathered by my calling this the greatest of American poems that literary criticism is not my day job.)

That's dominance! And these same Chicago Cubs certainly could have become the first team ever to win five straight pennants. Let us not forget that in 1909, the one year from 1906 to 1910 they finished second instead of first, the Cubs won 104 games. It so happened that's the year the Pittsburgh Pirates won 110 to finish $6\frac{1}{2}$ games ahead of Chicago. The 1942 Brooklyn Dodgers also won 104 games without winning a pennant, but they finished only two games behind.

The Pittsburgh Pirates were competitive through the entire decade, winning four pennants (the last in 1909), with both dependable pitching and a solid offense. Shortstop Honus Wagner, left fielder Fred Clarke (who was also manager), and Tommy Leach, who played third base and outfield were the Pirates' foundation for the decade. With those three, second baseman Claude Ritzey, center fielder Ginger Beaumont, and pitchers Deacon Phillippe and Sam Leever as cornerstones, Pittsburgh had a near dynasty at the beginning of the decade. The **1901 to 1905 Pittsburgh Pirates** won three consecutive pennants from 1901 to 1903 by margins of $7\frac{1}{2}$, $27\frac{1}{2}$, and $6\frac{1}{2}$ games, twice leading the league in runs scored and twice in fewest runs allowed. The Pirates so dominated the league those years that they rarely were not in first place. In each of their pennant-winning seasons, Pittsburgh was at the top of the NL heap to stay by the Fourth of July, and for all practical purposes the pennant races were decided by September all three years.

The Pirates' only 100-win season was in 1902, when they won 103 games while losing only 36—the second highest winning percentage in all of major league baseball in the twentieth century, after the 1906 Chicago Cubs. But this is a bit misleading because major league schedules called for only 140 games and did not expand to 154 games until 1904. Pittsburgh's winning percentages in both 1901 and 1903 would have given them 100

victories in both years had they played 154 games, so one could almost say the Pirates had three consecutive 100-win seasons. After appearing in, and losing, the first World Series in modern times in 1903, the Pirates fell flat to a disappointing fourth-place finish in 1904. They rebounded with 96 wins in 1905, but finished nine games behind the Giants and were never really in the pennant hunt.

The loss of a significant number of the National League's best players to the upstart American League at the beginning of the century, however, diminishes to some extent Pittsburgh's historical legacy from 1901 to 1903. Having themselves benefited from NL contraction in 1900 from twelve to eight teams, and from accepted practice at the time of more prosperous ownership groups being able to control more than one franchise, the Pirates suffered less than other National League teams when the AL enticed star players to leave for bigger paychecks. Pittsburgh had been middle of the pack at best in the years preceding contraction, but picked up Wagner, Clarke, Leach, Ritchey, and Phillippe (among others) when the Louisville Colonels—run by the same ownership group as the Pirates—faced contraction. These additions elevated the Pirates from seventh place (out of twelve teams) in 1899 to second behind Brooklyn in 1900. Pittsburgh's only core player from 1900 to defect to the American League was third baseman Jimmy Williams, still at the beginning of his career. The two-time defending NL champion Brooklyn Superbas (soon to be known as the Dodgers), meanwhile, lost an ace pitcher (Joe McGinnity), their center fielder (Fielder Jones), and third baseman (Lave Cross) to the new league and wound up third in 1901.

Although Pittsburgh probably would have had the league's best team regardless, the National League was a weaker league when they were winning their three straight pennants. The 1901-05 Pirates had four players who were the best at their position for all or the majority of those years, including Honus Wagner and player-manager Fred Clarke. Second baseman Claude Ritchey and third baseman Tommy Leach, however, were the best at their positions in the beginning years of the twentieth century only because Napoleon Lajoie and Jimmy Collins had jumped to the American League.

On the heels of the Pirates, the next outstanding NL team was the **1904 to 1908 New York Giants**. The Giants were built to be a potential dynasty in their own right by John McGraw, who jumped from the AL's Baltimore franchise, where he was part owner as well as manager, to take over as manager of the Giants in July 1902. The Giants were a losing franchise at the time, but with a priceless asset in right-hander Christy Mathewson. Bringing his pitching ace Joe McGinnity, the versatile Roger Bresnahan, and first baseman Dan McGann with him from Baltimore, McGraw wasted little time in turning the New York Giants into a powerhouse. By 1904, McGraw had also acquired shortstop Bill Dahlen from Brooklyn and established Art Devlin at third base. With these as their core players, the Giants won back-to-back pennants with 106 wins (in the new 154-game schedule) in 1904 and 105 in 1905. Both were blowout pennant races, the Giants winning by 13 games one year and nine games the next. Like the Pirates in the three previous seasons, the 1904 and 1905 pennant-winning Giants led the league virtually the entirety of both seasons.

Although crumbling to fourth in 1907 with only 82 wins, the Giants had outstanding 96- and 98-win seasons in 1906 and 1908, respectively, only to finish 20 games behind the Cubs in 1906 and to lose the 1908 pennant on a final day make-up game necessitated by the infamous "Merkle boner," which certainly caused millions of New Yorkers to ask, how could you not win a game that you actually won? The answer? By Fred Merkle failing to complete

his journey of 90 feet from first to second base after the winning run scored on the presumed game-winning hit, of course—a rookie “boner” that apparently, according to conventional history at least, was not all that uncommon in those early-century days. The 1904-08 Giants led the league in runs scored three times, including 1908, and once in fewest runs allowed (1904). They were second in the league in scoring the two other years, and twice were second and twice third in giving up the fewest runs.

Between them, the 1904-08 Giants were a better team than the 1901-05 Pirates. Given the difference between 140- and 154-game schedules, the two teams were comparable according to my dominance factors. The National League, however, was a weaker league when the Pirates were winning their three straight pennants because of the impact of star player defections to the American League; the Giants faced tougher competition—the Cubs *and* the Pirates—from 1904 to 1908 than the Pirates faced, particular from 1901 to 1903. Pittsburgh had four players who were the best at their position for all or the majority of those years, including Wagner and player-manager Clarke, but as already mentioned, second baseman Ritchey and third baseman Leach were the best at their positions in the beginning years of the century only because superior would-have-been claimants Napoleon Lajoie and Jimmy Collins were now in the American League. The Giants had three players who were the best at their positions for all or most years between 1904 and 1908: Roger Bresnahan as a multi-position regular playing catcher and the outfield, third baseman Art Devlin, and Christy Mathewson as one of five starting pitchers.

Four of Pittsburgh’s position players—Wagner, Clarke, Leach, and Ginger Beaumont—were among the ten best in the league in the surrounding decade based on their best consecutive years, according to me using the wins above replacement (WAR) metric, as were two of their pitchers (Phillippe and Leever) among the league’s five best. The Giants had Mathewson, Bresnahan, and Devlin among the National League’s best in the surrounding decade. Joe McGinnity was indeed an Iran Man workhorse from 1904 to 1907, leading the league in games pitched each year and twice in victories, but was not one of the league’s five best pitchers over any five or more consecutive years in the surrounding decade. The Giants have the advantage in great players at their best during the years under consideration for their teams. Mathewson, for his best consecutive years of 1903 to 1913, and Bresnahan (1903-08) both have century-plus legacies for the 1904-08 Giants, while Wagner (1901-12) has a century-plus legacy for the 1901-05 Pirates, and Clarke (1901-09) was one of the 25 best position players in the National League in the first half-century. Of historical note based on WAR, Wagner’s *very best* five consecutive years were from 1905 to 1909, and Mathewson’s from 1908 to 1912.

Which brings us back to the **1906 to 1910 Chicago Cubs**. This was a well-balanced team with few weaknesses, dominant in every facet of the game. We’ve already seen their dominance in the win column and in winning three pennants by decisive margins and a fourth in the tightest of pennant races, which is itself a mark of greatness.

Chicago had remarkable stability among its core regulars, with eight position players and four pitchers on the roster all five years. This being an era when core regulars would receive nearly all of the playing time with bench players there to fill in only when necessary, it is perhaps not surprising that the Cubs’ core players—eight position players and five pitchers, including Carl Lundgren who was on the team only through 1908—accounted for 96

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percent of the total WAR recorded for the team over those years. In 1906, for example, aside from their eight starting position player regulars, Chicago had only three players appear in more than five games: Pat Moran, their second catcher (after Johnny Kling), who caught 61 games; infielder-outfielder Solly Hofman, who appeared in 64 games; and outfielder Doc Gessler, who appeared in 25. Of those three, only Moran and Hofman had more than 100 plate appearances.

The Cubs' pitching and defense was phenomenal. Four times during this five-year run, the Cubs led the league in fewest runs allowed, and they did so by substantial margins. In 1906, the Cubs allowed only 381 runs; Pittsburgh allowed the second fewest, 470—almost 90 more. In 1907, Chicago's 390 runs allowed were far fewer than the Philadelphia Phillies' second-lowest total of 476. In 1909, the Cubs allowed a mere 390 runs while the pennant-winning Pirates allowed the second fewest runs, 447. And in 1910, Chicago again led the league in fewest runs allowed with 499, compared to New York's 567. These are big differences. (In the only season the Cubs did not lead the league in fewest runs allowed, 1908 when they were third, they gave up only 16 more runs than the Phillies, who had the lowest total.)

Chicago's pitchers were true craftsmen. They were not power pitchers, leading the league in strikeouts only once, but allowed the fewest base runners per nine innings every year except 1908, when they were second to the Giants. Mordecai "Three-Finger" Brown, Ed Reulbach, Jack Pfeister, and Orval Overall were the heart of the best overall pitching staff in major league baseball. Brown and Reulbach were two of the five best pitchers in the league during this time and for the surrounding decade. Brown has an indisputable century-plus legacy for his best years from 1906 to 1910, and Reulbach's best consecutive years, also from 1906 to 1910, make him one of the 15 best pitchers in the National League for the first half of the twentieth century, according to me.

In addition to being one of the NL's two best starting pitchers in the decade (along with Mathewson), Brown could have been counted as the National League's best reliever. This was at a time when about two-thirds of all starts were complete games, when teams did not use pitchers exclusively in relief, and when managers often called upon their best starting pitchers to pitch in relief to win or save close games between starts. From 1908 to 1910 in particular, while starting and completing more games than any other pitcher on Chicago's formidable pitching staff, Brown was a workhorse out of the bullpen. He started 96 of the 467 games the Cubs played those three years—one out of every five—completing 86, but also finished 41 games started by other pitchers, picking up seven wins (against five losses) and 19 retroactively-awarded saves. To put his role in perspective, Three-Finger Brown was in at the finish of 27 percent of the Cubs' games and, with a record of 81-32 and those 19 saves, he had a direct stake in 100 of the Cubs' 307 victories—almost exactly one-third—from 1908 to 1910.

As great as their pitching was, the Cubs' defense during these years was outstanding. According to data available on the website *baseball-reference.com*, Chicago led the league in defensive efficiency—making outs on balls put into play—every year except for 1908. Their making outs on 72.6 percent of playable balls from 1906 to 1910 was far better than the league average of 69.9 percent. In 1906 and 1907, the Cubs' defensive efficiency was 4.2 and 3.5 percent better than the second best National League team. While the Cubs never led the league in double plays—thanks in large part to their stinginess in allowing base runners—

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“Tinkers-to-Evers-to-Chance” deserved to have a poem written about them for their defensive prowess.

The 1906-10 Cubs also had an impressive offense to go along with great pitching and terrific defense. They led the league in runs scored only once—in their incredible 1906 season—but finished second each of the next four years. Arch rivals Pittsburgh and New York both led the league in scoring twice. Of no small significance, however, was the offensive efficiency of these Chicago Cubs in taking advantage of scoring opportunities. The Cubs had the best ratio of runs to hits, as well as runs to total base runners (determined by total hits, walks, and hit batsmen), of any team in the National League from 1906 to 1910, besting the league average by 13 and 12 percent, respectively. This was a team that not only won blowouts—a record of 147-49 in games decided by five or more runs for a percentage of .750 over the five years—but also the close ones; they were 146-82 in one-run games for a .640 winning percentage, which is excellent.

I count the Cubs as having had four position players—first baseman (and manager) Frank Chance, second baseman Johnny Evers, catcher Johnny Kling, and left fielder Jimmy Sheckard (as one of three outfielders)—whose five or more years as the best in the league at their position included at least three consecutive between 1906 and 1910. And were it not for Honus Wagner at shortstop, Joe Tinker would have made five. Third baseman Harry Steinfeldt was also an exceptional player, the best at his position after the Giants’ Art Devlin. Evers, Chance, Tinker, and Sheckard were also among the ten best position players in the league for the surrounding decade from 1904 to 1913, but only Evers has a half-century and century-plus legacy that includes the majority of years under consideration for this team. Frank Chance also has a century-plus legacy as one of the 50 best NL position players since 1901, but not for the 1906-10 Cubs because only the last two of his best consecutive years based on WAR, 1903 to 1907, fall within the timeframe under consideration. In 1909 and 1910, Chance did not play in more than 93 games either season.

Taking their overall achievement and dominance of the league and the contemporary and historical legacies of their players, the 1906-10 Chicago Cubs have by far the best score of any National League team in history using my methodological approach. My inclusion of Johnny Evers as having a century-plus legacy for the 1906-10 Cubs, based on his best consecutive years from 1907 to 1912 and an understanding derived from historical accounts of his leadership on the team, is bound to be controversial. The argument has been advanced, after all, that neither he nor double-play partner Joe Tinker were deserving of Hall of Fame enshrinement based on their career performance. (And Frank Chance, some say, was not either, given he had only six seasons in which he played 100 or more games.) I’m comfortable with my selection, but should I concede that Evers was not a century-plus legacy player based on his best consecutive years including 1907 to 1910, the 1906-10 Cubs would still have the highest overall score (122) of any National League team in history by my methodological approach. And that would be true even if his best consecutive years as a player did not make Evers one of the NL’s 25 best position players in the first half-century, which would give the Cubs a total score of 120.

3 BEST NATIONAL LEAGUE TEAMS, 1901-1910

	P-WS	W - L %	Ach	Dom	Play	Total
Chicago Cubs, 1906-10	4 - 2	530-235 .693	32	60	33	125
New York Giants, 1904-08	2 - 1x	487-278 .637	22	40	24	86
Pittsburgh Pirates, 1901-05	3 - 0x	467-257 .645	22	30	26	78

x = no World Series in 1901, 1902, and 1904

P = Pennant WS = World Series Ach = Achievement Score

Dom = Dominance Factors Score Play = Players Score Total = Total Score

The 1906-10 Chicago Cubs often seem a footnote in history despite their achievement and dominance. One reason is that they played in the dead ball era. Another is that they won only two of the four World Series they played in, their last championship coming in 1908 when they beat the Detroit Tigers in five games. And the 1906 Cubs—winners of 116 games and holders of the highest team winning percentage in the modern era—can never live down the legacy of being beaten in the only all-Chicago World Series by the team known as the “Hitless Wonders.”

Going into the 1906 World Series, it seemed highly improbable that the Chicago White Sox could defeat the Cubs. Both teams had exceptional pitching, but the Cubs had a far superior offense. The Cubs scored more runs than any other team in baseball. Their league-leading batting average was 18 percentage points better than NL average. They were also the powerhouse of National League teams, leading the league in home runs with 20, tied for the lead in triples with 71, and second in doubles with 181. Twenty-one percent of their hits went for extra bases. The White Sox, by contrast, were third in the American League in scoring, mostly because they were so proficient in drawing walks and playing small ball, but last in batting average, and only 18 percent of their hits were for extra bases—the fewest in the league. Perhaps the most significant indicator of the Cubs’ overwhelming dominance of the baseball world in 1906 was that they outscored their game opponents by a phenomenal 85 percent (704 runs to 381), while the White Sox outscored their game opponents by only 24 percent (570 to 460).

As it happened, both teams scored 22 runs in the World Series. The White Sox held the Cubs’ seemingly imposing offensive juggernaut to one fewer hit than the Sox were able to gather off the Cubs’ own stellar staff. Perhaps the quality of the White Sox’ pitching was such that baseball experts of the day should have considered the possibility that the Cubs might lose because, after all, good pitching can stop good hitting on any given day or in a short series. But the explanation for why the White Sox stunned the heavily favored Cubs was that—

—The hitless, punchless wonders were uncharacteristically . . . offensive. The White Sox who averaged less than one hit in five going for more than a single during the regular season had 35 percent of their 37 hits in the World Series go for extra bases. That would be ten doubles and three triples. Extra-base hits are a much more efficient way to score base runners than sacrifice bunts, stolen bases, and situational hitting. The White Sox scored in eleven of the 55 innings they came to bat in the six-game World Series. An extra-base hit

either began a rally or drove in runs in seven of those innings and directly contributed to 15 of the 22 White Sox runs. Only two of their extra-base hits did not contribute to a run. Seven Sox players who had extra-base hits came around to score, but more significantly, eight of those 13 extra-base hits drove in a total of 12 runs. Extra-base hits helped the White Sox score two of every five runners they put on base. The vaunted Cubs' offense, meanwhile, could score only one of every three runners, in part because only 25 percent of their 36 hits went for extra bases; all nine of them were doubles.

TRANSPARENCY ANNEX

PITTSBURGH PIRATES, 1901-1905

3 Pennants (1901, 1902, 1903)
0 World Series Wins* (no World Series in 1901-02)

ACHIEVEMENT

1 st place (x 3)	2 nd place (x 2)	3 rd place (x 1)	World Series (x 1)	Score
3 x 3 = 9	1 x 2 = 2	0	0	11

ACHIEVEMENT SCORE = 11 / 5 years x 10 = **22**

DOMINANCE

100 Wins	8 Games Ahead	NL1/Runs Scored	NL1/Fewest Runs Allowed	Score
1	1	2	2	6

DOMINANCE SCORE = 6 / 20 (4 x 5 seasons) x 100 = **30**

PLAYERS

CORE REGULARS	WAR 1901-05	BEST at POSITION	Decade 1899-1908	1 st 1/2 20 th C	20 th C +
1B Kitty Bransfield, 1901-04	4.6	no	no		
2B Claude Ritchey, 1900-06	16.7	1899-1905	no		
IF-SS Honus Wagner, 1900-16	43.5	MPR '98-02; SS 1903-12 *	1899-1908	yes	yes
3B/OF Tommy Leach, 1901-11	19.0	3B 1901-04	1902-07	no	
LF Fred Clarke, 1900-11	23.7	1902-11	1899-1907	yes	no
CF Ginger Beaumont, 1899-1905	21.3	no	1901-05	no	
P Deacon Phillippe, 1900-07	19.3	s/o	1899-1903	no	
P Sam Leever, 1899-1907	18.4	no	1899-1903	no	
TEAM WAR, 1901-05 = 211.4	166.5				
Core WAR= 78.8 % of Team War 42.3 Av. Team WAR + 78.8 %	75.6 / 10 7.6	4.5 / 8 x 10 5.6	6 x 1 6	2 x 2 4	1 x 3 3

PLAYERS SCORE = 7.6 (Base WAR) + 5.6 (Best at Position) + 13 (NL Best) = **26.2**

NEW YORK GIANTS, 1904-1908

2 Pennants (1904, 1905)
1 World Series Win (1905)

ACHIEVEMENT

1 st place (x 3)	2 nd place (x 2)	3 rd place (x 1)	World Series (x 1)	Score
2 x 3 = 6	2 x 2 = 4	0	1 x 1 = 1	11

ACHIEVEMENT SCORE = 11 / 5 years x 10 = **22**

DOMINANCE

100 Wins	8 Games Ahead	NL1/Runs Scored	NL1/Fewest Runs Allowed	Score
2	2	3	1	8

DOMINANCE SCORE = 8 / 20 (4 x 5 seasons) x 100 = **40**

PLAYERS

CORE REGULARS	WAR 1904-08	BEST at POSITION	Decade 1901-10	1 st ½ 20 th C	20 th C +
1B Dan McGann, 1902-07	14.5	no	no		
2B Billy Gilbert, 1903-06	5.6	no	no		
SS Bill Dahlen, 1904-07	12.5	no	*		
3B Art Devlin, 1904-11	24.4	1905-11	1904-09	no	
RF George Browne, 1903-07	5.7	no	no		
C/CF Roger Bresnahan, 1902-08	22.6	1903-10	1903-08	yes	yes
P Christy Mathewson, 1901-15	34.2	1903-13	1903-10	yes	yes
P Joe McGinnity, 1902-08	18.3	no	no		
P Dummy Taylor, 1901-08	9.4	no	no		
P Hooks Wiltse, 1904-11	15.0	no	no		
P Red Ames, 1905-12	7.7	no	no		
TEAM WAR, 1904-08 = 226.7	169.9				
Core WAR= 74.9 % of Team	79.2 / 10	3 / 11 x 10	3 x 1	2 x 2	2 x 3
45.3 Av. Team WAR + 74.9 %	7.92	2.7	3	4	6

PLAYERS SCORE = 7.9 (Base WAR) + 2.7 (Best at Position) + 13 (NL Best) = **23.5**

* Dahlen one of NL's 10 best position players of decade for best years of 1901-05.

CHICAGO CUBS, 1906-1910

4 Pennants (1906, 1907, 1908, 1910)
2 World Series Wins (1907, 1908)

ACHIEVEMENT

1 st place (x 3)	2 nd place (x 2)	3 rd place (x 1)	World Series (x 1)	Score
4 x 3 = 12	1 x 2 = 2	0	2 x 1 = 2	16

ACHIEVEMENT SCORE = 16 / 5 years x 10 = **32**

DOMINANCE

100 Wins	8 Games Ahead	NL1/Runs Scored	NL1/Fewest Runs Allowed	Score
4	3	1	4	12

DOMINANCE SCORE = 12 / 20 (4 x 5 seasons) x 100 = **60**

PLAYERS

CORE REGULARS	WAR 1906-10	BEST at POSITION	Decade 1904-13	1 st ½ 20 th C	20 th C +
1B Frank Chance, 1903-10	22.6	1903-08	1904-09	no	*
2B Johnny Evers, 1903-13	23.1	1906-14	1907-12	yes	yes
SS Joe Tinker, 1902-12	21.4	s/o	1908-13	no	
3B Harry Steinfeldt, 1906-10	17.0	no	no		
LF Jimmy Sheppard, 1906-12	14.8	1902-12	1906-11	no	
RF Frank Schulte, 1905-16	11.9	no	no		
OF/IF Solly Hofman, 1905-12	15.6	no	no		
C Johnny Kling, 1901-10 (-1)	13.6	1902-08	no		
P Mordecai Brown, 1904-12	34.3	1906-11	1906-10	yes	yes
P Ed Reulbach, 1905-12	19.4	1905-10	1905-09	yes	no
P Orval Overall, 1906-10	19.6	no	no		
P Jack Pfeister, 1906-11	14.3	no	no		
P Carl Lundgren, 1902-08	5.6	no	no		
TEAM WAR, 1906-10 = 247.0	233.2				
Core WAR= 94.4 % of Team 49.4 Av. Team WAR + 94.4 %	96.0 / 10 9.6	6.5 / 13 x 10 5.0	6 x 1 6	3 x 2 6	2 x 3 6

* Chance one of NL's 50 best position players for best years of 1903-07.

PLAYERS SCORE = 9.6 (Base WAR) + 5 (Best at Position) + 18 (NL Best) = **32.6**

BEST PLAYERS IN SURROUNDING DECADE

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

1901-05 PIRATES	1904-08 GIANTS	1906-10 CUBS
10 BEST NL POSITION PLAYERS, 1899-1908	10 BEST NL POSITION PLAYERS, 1901-1910	10 BEST NL POSITION PLAYERS, 1904-1913
<i>Honus Wagner, IF-SS, '99-08</i>	Honus Wagner, SS, 1901-09	Honus Wagner, SS, 1904-12
Frank Chance, 1B, 1903-07	Frank Chance, 1B, 1903-07	<i>Johnny Evers, 2B, '07-12 (-1)</i>
R. Bresnahan, C/OF, '03-08	<i>R. Bresnahan, C/OF, '03-08</i>	Sherry Magee, OF, 1905-10
Roy Thomas, OF, 1899-1905	Sherry Magee, OF, 1905-10	<i>Frank Chance, 1B, 1904-08</i>
Bill Dahlen, SS, 1899-1904	Fred Clarke, OF, 1901-10	Fred Clarke, OF, 1905-09
<i>Fred Clarke, OF, 1899-1907</i>	Roy Thomas, OF, 1901-05	Art Devlin, 3B, 1904-09
Art Devlin, 3B, 1904-08	<i>Art Devlin, 3B, 1904-09</i>	<i>Joe Tinker, SS, 1908-13</i>
<i>Ginger Beaumont, OF, '01-05</i>	Johnny Evers, 2B, 1906-10	Ed Konetchy, 1B, 1909-13
<i>Tommy Leach, 3B/OF, '02-07</i>	Bill Dahlen, SS, 1901-05 *	Larry Doyle, 2B, 1909-13
Jimmy Sheckard, OF, '02-06	Tommy Leach, 3B/OF, '02-07	<i>Jimmy Sheckard, OF, '06-11</i>
	* Only 2 years with Giants	
5 BEST NL PITCHERS, 1899-1908	5 BEST NL PITCHERS, 1901-1910	5 BEST NL PITCHERS, 1904-1913
Noodles Hanh, 1899-1904	<i>Christy Mathewson, 1903-10</i>	Christy Mathewson, 1904-13
Christy Mathewson, 1903-08	Mordecai Brown, 1906-10	<i>Mordecai Brown, 1906-10</i>
Vic Willis, 1899-1903	Ed Reulbach, 1905-09	Nap Rucker, 1908-12
<i>Deacon Phillippe, 1899-1903</i>	Jack Taylor, 1902-06	<i>Ed Reulbach, 1905-09</i>
<i>Sam Liever, 1899-1903</i>	Vic Willis, 1901-06	Babe Adams, 1909-13

BEST AT POSITION

1B	(93) Beckley-----→Chance-----→Konetchy-----→
2B	Ritchey-----→Evers-----→
SS	Dahlen-----→Wagner-----→Fletcher----→(19)
3B	Leach-----→Devlin-----→R.Smith-----→
OF	(93)Delahanty→Sheckard-----→Burns-----→(20)
OF	(95)Burkett---→Clarke-----→Cravath-----→(17)
OF	Thomas-----→Magee-----→
MP	Wagner, IF/OF----→Bresnahan, C/OF-----→Herzog, IF-----→
C	(95) McGuire---→Kling-----→Meyers-----→
P	(90)Nichols→J.Taylor-----→Rucker-----→
P	Tannehill-----→Mathewson-----→
P	McGinnity~~~~→Brown-----→Tesreau-----→
P	Hahn-----→Reulbach-----→Alexander-----→(28)
P	Willis-----→Adams-----→
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