

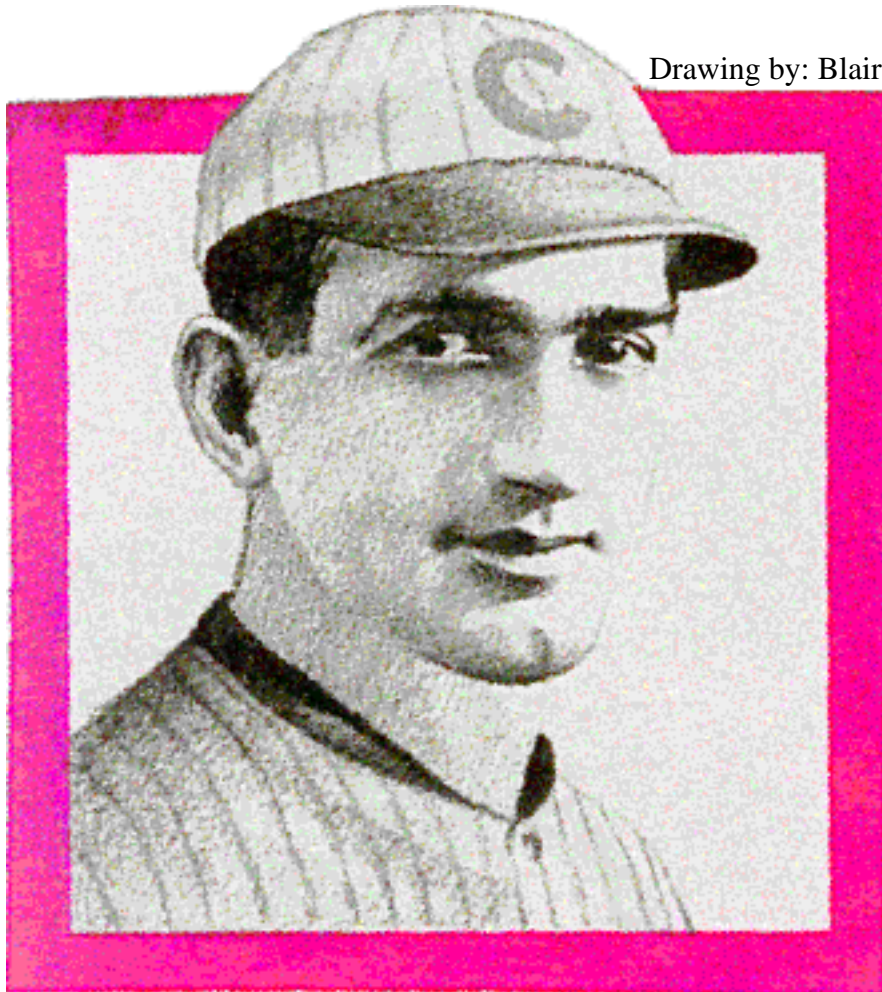
Issue#1

Winter 1992

Shoeless Joe Jackson Times

**A CLOSER LOOK AT ONE OF THE GAMES
GREATEST PLAYERS OF ALL TIME.**

Drawing by: Blair Jenson -- Culture House



News From The Editor

Welcome readers to the first edition of the “*Shoeless Joe Jackson Times*”. My name is Trevor D. Kramer and I have been a huge fan of Jackson’s for many years now. I hope this newsletter will inform people about his life, his career, and his involvement in the scandal of 1919. My dream is to see him inducted into the Hall of Fame, and maybe this newsletter will help this come true.

I would like this newsletter to express many points of view. So there will be a section in the next issue called *Readers Write* where you can write in and I will print your letter with a reply. If you have a question or want to say anything please print your letter on the last page and send to Readers Write, 10 Shiloh Court, Madison, Wisconsin 53705. Since this is the first edition of the *Shoeless Joe Jackson Times*, I have very few readers. If you know of anyone who might be interested in receiving this newsletter, please print their name and address on the last page of this newsletter and return. Thank You.

A Short Biography

Joseph Jefferson Jackson was born in 1880 at Brandon Mills, South Carolina. When he was only seven, he went to work in the local cotton mills. The young Jackson found that he enjoyed baseball much more than work and frequently snuck out to play baseball with the other boys. When he was only thirteen, he was asked to join the Brandon Mill, baseball team. The team was made up of the best players in the town. The players got the best jobs at the mill and were envied by the townsfolk. The team would play other

mill teams in the area. The baseball teams were the primary way people could distinguish or compare themselves to other towns. Most of the players on the team were grown men while Joe was just a boy at 13. Amazingly he was the star of the league. A local carpenter watched Joe play and was so impressed that as a gift he made him a bat. Joe called it **Black Betsy** - the bat that he used throughout most of his career.

After a game in 1908 when Tommy Stouch, an unofficial scout for the Philadelphia Athletics, saw Joe play, he signed him to a contract to play for the Greenville Spinners, a minor league organization. His average for the season was in the .350s! The next season he joined the Philadelphia Athletics to play in the major leagues. But Joe hated it in Philadelphia. The writers called him a “Shoeless Yokel” and made fun of him every day. The players made fun of his illiteracy and country ways. The next season he asked to be sent down to the minor leagues. He batted .358 in the 138 games he played in Savannah until he was brought back up to the majors. He played terrible. Connie Mack knew he would never play well in a city he hated, so was traded to the Cleveland Naps the next season. He liked Cleveland and made friends with players on the team, and in his first full year in the major’s he batted .408. He played well with the Naps, but in 1916 he was traded to the Chicago White Sox.

\$\$\$ *Next issue the complete story of what happened in Chicago and the world series of 1919.* \$\$\$

Joe Jackson's Stats

<u>Year</u>	<u>Games</u>	<u>At Bats</u>	<u>Hits</u>	<u>2B</u>	<u>3B</u>	<u>HR</u>
1908	5	5	3	0	0	0
1909	5	17	5	0	0	0
1910	20	75	29	2	5	1
1911	147	571	233	45	19	7
1912	152	572	266	44	26	3
1913	148	528	197	39	17	7
1914	122	453	153	22	13	3
1915	128	461	142	20	17	5
1916	155	592	202	40	21	3
1917	146	538	162	20	17	5
1918	17	65	23	2	2	1
1919	139	516	181	31	14	7
<u>1920</u>	<u>146</u>	<u>570</u>	<u>218</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>12</u>
13yrs	1330	4981	1774	307	168	54

<u>Year</u>	<u>Runs</u>	<u>RBI</u>	<u>BB</u>	<u>SO</u>	<u>BA</u>	<u>SB</u>
1908	0	3	0		.130	0
1909	3	3	1		.294	0
1910	15	11	8		.387	4
1911	126	83	56		.408	41
1912	121	90	54		.395	35
1913	109	71	80	26	.373	26
1914	61	53	41	34	.338	22
1915	63	81	52	23	.308	16
1916	91	78	46	25	.341	24
1917	91	75	57	25	.301	25
1918	9	20	8	1	.354	3
1919	79	96	60	10	.351	9
<u>1920</u>	<u>105</u>	<u>121</u>	<u>56</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>.382</u>	<u>9</u>
13yrs	873	785	519	158	.356	158

Bold print indicates he led the league in that category.

Started career with Philadelphia, then was traded to Cleveland, and then was traded to Chicago.

Hall of Fame?

Should the Hall of Fame allow Joe Jackson to be eligible for membership? Yes! My main argument is with what the first commissioner of baseball, Commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis, said: “Regardless of the verdict of the juries, no player that throws a game, no player that entertains proposals or promises to throw a game, no player that sits in a conference with a bunch of crooks and gamblers where the means of throwing games are discussed and does not promptly tell his club about it will ever play professional baseball again.”

In the first part of this quotation it states, “Regardless of the verdict of the juries . . .” If a federal court finds the players innocent, then he had no right to override that decision, does he? Did he declare himself god? If a court of law found them innocent, how can they be guilty? In the second part of the quote it states, “no player that throws a game . . .” There is no proof that attempted to throw a single game. He batted .375 with 12 hits. That record stood until 1964. He had the only homerun of the series and made no errors. Writers who attended games testified that Jackson’s playing during the series was that of a player doing his best for the club.

The next part of the quote states, “. . . no player that sits in a conference with a bunch of crooks and gamblers where the means of throwing baseball games are discussed . . .” It is not clear whether or not he sat in a conference, but he did get offered money to throw the World Series of 1919. However, he refused.

The last part of the quotation states,

“. . . and does not promptly tell his club about it . . .” Joe Jackson did that. He went to Comiskey, the White Sox owner, and told him he thought there was a fix going on, but Comiskey said rumors circulate about that every year. Late in his life, Jackson said, “I went to the room of Mr. Charles Comiskey, owner of the White Sox, the night before the series started and asked him to keep me out of the lineup. He refused, and I begged him, ‘Tell the newspapers you suspended me for being drunk, or anything, but leave me of the Series and then there can be no question.’”

A sportswriter said in Joe’s favor, “Such tyranny is inconsistent with the theory of common justice. Even a murderer has his chance for parole.” Think about that one. Is Joe Jackson worse than a criminal, does he deserve parole. Of course he does! His debt is paid to society and to baseball. The Commissioner banned the eight men for life. All of them are long dead. Their debt is paid. Let them be free!

The Joe Jackson Poster Story

By: Mike Chapman

My true sports passions are amateur wrestling and professional boxing. I am an author of ten books and have been published in 17 national magazines, writing mostly about wrestling and boxing. I have an extensive boxing and wrestling collection. Jack Dempsey is a bigger hero to me than Babe Ruth — and I would much rather meet Muhammad Ali (again) than any baseball player.

And yet for decades I have harbored a keen interest in Shoeless Joe Jackson. The name has always conveyed a certain mystique — a reminder of a much simpler era, when sports were played more for the pure joy than for commercial gain.

The movie “Field of Dreams” rekindled my interest in Jackson. Because I was born and raised in Iowa, the story held even more appeal to me than perhaps the average baseball/movie fan.

But what really pushed me over the edge was the movie “Eight Men Out”. After seeing that film twice, I became determined to learn more about Jackson and the Black Sox.

I bought every book I could get my hands on that dealt with Shoeless Joe and the boys. The best of the lot, for my money, is “Say It Ain’t So, Joe,” written by Donald Gropman. The author has really done his homework, and presents what I consider is a balanced portrait of Jackson, perhaps the greatest pure hitter of all time.

Two years ago, I decided I wanted a Shoeless Joe Jackson poster. I scanned the various catalogs in vain, and made a point to stop at all the baseball card stores in the Chicago area.

When I learned there was no such poster available, I decided to create my own.

I commissioned Blair Jensen, a young artist who had done some work for me when I was the editor of a sports paper in Iowa, to produce a Joe Jackson poster.

Blair knew almost nothing about Jackson, but rented “Field of Dreams” and “Eight Men Out”. He threw himself into the research, going to his local library and

looking at all the old baseball books available.

I described what I wanted — a large centerpiece drawing of Jackson running “shoeless” through an outfield, and then two smaller drawings of what Joe really looked like.

Blair came up with a tremendous work of art. I added some biographical material and also wrote a poetic tribute to Jackson. I called the poster “The Legend”.

There were two reasons I decided against full color: (1) the cost would be far higher than I wanted to invest in the project, and (2) I wanted the poster to look like it came from the 1917-1920 era.

As I was financing the project by myself, I wasn’t sure how many posters to produce. I had no idea if there was much interest in Joe Jackson “out there” in America, but I hoped there was.

The poster was printed on heavy, tan stock. It is 17 by 22 inches in size, and has a great feel to it. Mine at home is framed in a classy red frame, and hangs in my den. It looks terrific.

I placed an ad in Sports Collectors Digest for \$250, and held my breath. I had well over \$2,500 invested in the project, and wondered if I would end up with 2,000 posters in the garage.

But.....two weeks after the ad appeared, the mail orders began to roll in. Within ten days, I had over 100 orders.

Then, the White Sox announced they were holding a “Turn Back the Clock” game, with players dressed in 1919 uniforms. My wife, Bev, and I drove into Chicago, obtained a city sales permit, and began hawking the posters in the street two blocks from Comiskey.

Though we had just a tiny corner,

after the game, we were flooded with business. We were rolling the posters and putting rubber bands around them, and couldn't keep up the demand. We were shocked — in less than an hour we sold almost 200 posters in just that one tiny area!

I wrote a letter to Don Lansing, owner of the Field of Dreams movie location in Dyserville, Iowa, and asked him if they would consider selling the poster at his stand.

He ordered 300 posters. Within five weeks, he reordered. This past summer, he bought a third batch.

To date, we have just 70 of the original 2,000 posters remaining. I have received complimentary letters from all over the nation. People seem to like the poster a great deal, and that makes me very happy.

Of course, making a few bucks on a venture like this is certainly rewarding. But honestly — that's not why I started the project. I love history, and the great personalities of the past. I felt Joe Jackson deserved such a tribute, and I was determined to try and pull it off.

The Joe Jackson poster has led to other ventures. I recently produced a poster on the history of the world heavyweight champions (back when the sport was far more legitimate than now) and am developing one on the history of the world heavyweight boxing title.

I tried to do something good for Joe Jackson. In the long run, Joe has also done something very good for me.

(The Shoeless Joe Jackson poster is available by sending a check or money order for \$15.00 to Culture House, 706

Heights Road, Dixon, IL 61021. But hurry — there really are only 70 left).

