



Baseball players usually have a short stay with minor league teams. The Canadian League is no exception. After their stay in the Canadian League, players moved on. Some became near greats, others not so great and some even became notorious.

## CANADIAN BASEBALL LEAGUE

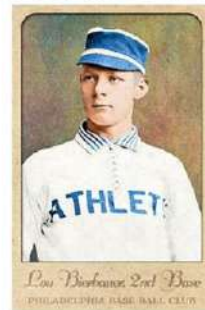
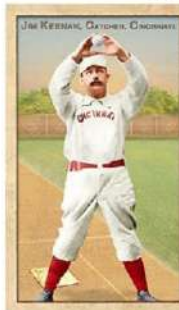
1911



Knotty Lee

The Canadian Baseball League was formed in 1911 largely through the efforts of George "Knotty" Lee. He is enshrined in the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame and is the first of many significant alumni of

## EARLY ATTRACTIONS



the league.

To increase public awareness and credibility former major leaguers were

hired as managers. This had the added effect of attracting young talented players

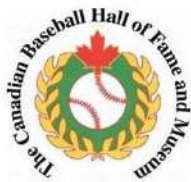


and the league moved up in classification rapidly from Class D to Class B. The aim was to become a Single A league. Along the way, the league developed 53 major leaguers in five years, an average of 10 a year. Some of these went straight to the majors from the Canadian League. I intend to mention every one of them.

Every team except the Berlin Green Sox produced at least one major leaguer. However, the Green Sox produced notable alumni outside the major leagues.

ROAD TO THE MAJORS			
Berlin Busy Bees 1	BERLIN Green Sox 0	BRANTFORD RED SOX 5	ERIE YANKEES 4
GUELPH MAPLE LEAFS 5	HAMILTON Hams 8	HAMILTON KOLTS 4	LONDON COCKNEYS 1
London TECUMSEHS 7	Ottawa SENATORS 12	Peterborough PETES 4	Peterborough WHITECAPS 2
	ST. THOMAS SAINTS 4	TORONTO BEAVERS 2	

As well, some of the alumni eventually became Hall of Famers. The Canadian Baseball League is represented in these Halls of Fame. There is the possibility that



**CANADIAN BASEBALL LEAGUE**

*Notable Alumni*

**Outside**

**MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL**



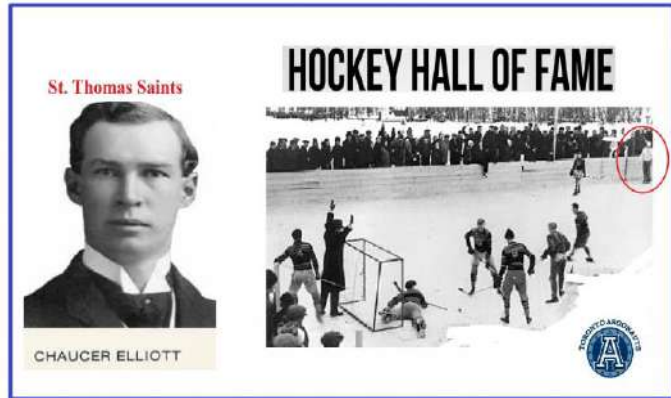
one Canadian Leaguer will go to Cooperstown but that's in the hands of the Veterans Committee.

There are four players who never made it to the majors but had significant careers after baseball. The first was Dusty Bullock. Ontario-born Dusty played on four of the five Canadian League championship teams. After baseball, Dusty moved to Mississippi where he became a "road cop" for three different police departments at the same time. He was so good at catching speeders that the fines he produced were more than double his salary. He was a steady source of income for three counties. As well, throughout prohibition, he ran a speakeasy called The Rendezvous. Oddly enough, it was the only speakeasy that was never raided by the police. Shortly after prohibition ended The Rendezvous burned down. Fortunately it was insured. Dusty took the money and retired in Memphis.





Chaucer Elliot also made his mark outside of baseball. He was a three sport athlete: baseball, football and hockey. He left baseball to focus on being a hockey referee and was enshrined in the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1961.



Delore "Frenchy" Chaput was a massive star for the 1911 Berlin Green Sox, winning 28 games that year. However, he threw his arm out in the



process, possibly because he threw more than 147 pitches in one game. Although he stuck around the minors for a few more years, he never regained his former dominance and never made the majors. When the United States entered World War I, he joined the American Army. Because he could speak French he was assigned to work with Hall of Famer Johnny Evers to introduce baseball to France. That did not work out.




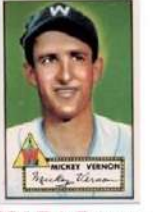
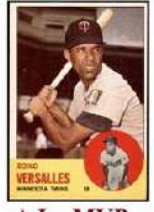

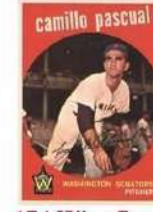
Joe Cambria was a mediocre player in the Canadian League who had his career cut

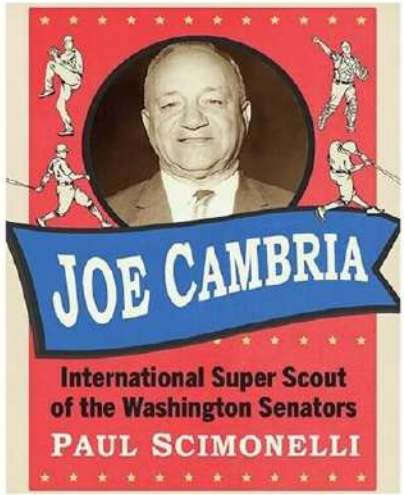


short by injury when he tripped over the railway tracks on the way to a game. He quit playing and moved to Baltimore, starting a dry cleaning business. He stayed in

the game by sponsoring a recreational league team, but soon tired of that and purchased a professional team. Over the years he became the owner of many minor league teams, as well as several Negro League teams. The Negro League connection led him to Cuba where he recognized the major talent pool that existed there. He combined his team ownership with scouting for the Washington Senators. Because of his connections in the Negro Leagues, he was able to open up Cuba to the major leagues, signing many players. He had a great eye for talent,

### Joe Cambria's major finds

 <b>EARLY WYNN</b> CLEVELAND INDIANS 300 wins, Hoff	 <b>TONY OLIVA</b> MINNAPOLIS TWINS .304 BA Hoff	 <b>Pedro Ramos</b> PITTSBURGH PIRATES 117 Wins	 <b>PETE RUNNELS</b> WASHINGTON SENATORS .291 BA, 9X All-Star
 <b>Hickey Vernon</b> MINNAPOLIS TWINS .286 BA 7X All Star	 <b>EDDIE VERSALLES</b> MINNAPOLIS TWINS A.L. MVP	 <b>camillo pascual</b> MINNAPOLIS TWINS 2109 games	 <b>camillo pascual</b> MINNAPOLIS TWINS 174 Wins 7X All-Star



as shown by some of his most significant finds. He is in the Baseball Scouts Hall of Fame and the Cuban Baseball Hall of Fame. He is also the subject of a recent book if you want to learn more.

Now on to the major leaguers. Of the 53 Canadian Leaguers who made it to the majors, 27 played only one season in the big leagues. Of these, five played only one game. John Barthold is the only one of these to manage a hit; the combined batting average of the five was .083.


## ONE GAME CAREERS

 <b>John Barthold</b> Peterborough White Caps 333 1/3	 <b>Ferd Eunick</b> Hamilton Hams 000 0/3	
 <b>Erwin Renfer</b> Ottawa Senators 000 0/2	 <b>Joe McManus</b> Guelph Maple Leafs 000 0/2	 <b>Tom Hess</b> Hamilton Kolts 000 0/2


**At Least They Made it**

Two of the one-year wonders were Canadians: Andy Kyle from Toronto and Dave Rowan from Elora. Rowan had the better stats, batting .385 for the Browns in his brief stay.

**CANADIANS**




**London Cockneys**



**Andy Kyle**  
Toronto, Ontario  
New York Giants

**Peterborough Petes**



**Dave Rowan**  
Elora, Ontario  
St. Louis Browns

Another notable one-year player was Billy Crystal but not this Billy Crystal. Bill Cristall in his one-year stay set records that will




**Billy Crystal**

never be broken and can never be broken. He has the best career stats of any major

leaguer born in the Russian Empire. As the Russian Empire ended in 1917, virtually everybody born in it is now dead. There were only three major leaguers born in

**London Tecumsehs**



**RECORDS THAT WILL NEVER BE BROKEN**

BATTER	PITCHER *
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most career At Bats</li> <li>Most career Hits</li> <li>Most career Triples</li> <li>Most Career RBI's</li> <li>Most Base on Balls</li> <li>Highest Career Batting Average</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most Career Starts</li> <li>Most Career Wins</li> <li>Most Career Strikeouts</li> <li>Most Career Hit Batters</li> <li>Lowest career ERA</li> </ul>

the Russian Empire. Coincidentally all three were Jewish. As well, Billy Crystal the actor is a descendant of Russian Jews.

Four other one-season players are notable. Fred Herbert was traded for future Hall of Famer Rube Marquard. Herbert was 1-1 for the Giants in 1915, while Marquard then won 56 games for Brooklyn over the next five years, en route to his career total 201 victories. Art Schwind became a major leaguer by mistake. Art played for Ottawa while his identical twin brother Al played for Berlin. The Braves scouted Al but accidentally signed Art. When the Braves realized their mistake, they cut Art, but it was too late to sign Al. He had suffered a serious injury and



# CLAIM TO FAME

Ottawa Senators



**Fred  
Herbert**

Traded for future  
Hall of Famer,  
Rube Marquard

Ottawa Senators



**Art  
Schwind**

A twin, released  
by Braves when  
they realized they  
signed the wrong  
brother

London Tecumsehs



**Jack  
Snyder**

At his death  
was the oldest  
living former  
Major Leaguer

Brantford Red Sox



**Al  
Tesch**










Every major  
League hit  
resulted in an  
RBI

decided to quit baseball. Jack Snyder played briefly for Brooklyn; when he died in 1981 he was the oldest living former major leaguer. And every one of the hits in Al Tesch's brief career produced an RBI.

The remainder had few accomplishments of interest, but these stand out. Charlie Snell broke into the majors at 18 and retired at 19 when he was sent back to the minors. Henry Baldwin batted .313 in his only season.

Twelve Canadian Leaguers were on 17 pennant-winning teams. Ed Killian won three pennants. Wickey McAvoy, Urban Shocker, Fred Payne and John Mitchell all

*...And The Rest*

			<b>Hamilton Hams</b> 
<b>Hamilton Hams</b> 	<b>Guelph Maple Leafs</b> 	<b>Erie Yankees</b> 	<b>Henry Baldwin</b> <b>Peterborough Petes</b> 
<b>Erie Yankees</b> 	<b>Hamilton Hams</b> 	<b>Ottawa Senators</b> 	<b>Toronto Beavers</b> 
<b>John Scott</b>	<b>George Shears</b>	<b>Frank Smykal</b>	<b>Charlie Snell</b>



# PENNANT WINNERS

Guelph Maple Leafs



Ed Killian  
3

Berlin Busy Bees



Wickey McAvoy  
2

Ottawa Senators



Urban Shocker  
2

Ottawa Senators



Fred Payne  
2

Ottawa Senators



John Mitchell  
2

Hamilton Hams



Howard Armstrong  
1

Brantford Red Sox



Dummy Taylor  
1

St. Thomas Saints



Vince Molyneaux  
1

London Tecumsehs



Greasy Neale  
1

Brantford Red Sox



Roy Wilkinson  
1

Peterborough Petes



Leon Dolan  
1

Peterborough Petes



Frank Rooney  
1

played for two winners. Six of these men became World Series champions.

# WORLD SERIES CHAMPIONS

Hamilton Hams



Howard Armstrong

Berlin Busy Bees



Wickey McAvoy

St. Thomas Saints



Vince Molyneaux

London Tecumsehs



Greasy Neale

Ottawa Senators



Urban Shocker

Brantford Red Sox



Dummy Taylor

The 1919 World Series was a pivotal point in baseball history. Two former Canadian Leaguers played in that series: pitcher Roy Wilkinson, a former Brantford Red Sox, and former London Tecumsehs outfielder Greasy Neale. They faced



each other three times. Neale had a hit, was walked and hit into a double play. While Wilkinson pitched well, Neale was the star of the series, leading the Reds in batting with a .357 average. He scored three runs and drove in four.

Greasy Neale played in the National League for 8 years,



★ ★ 1919 ★ ★  
WORLD SERIES






1913 Brantford Red Sox






1912-1913 London Tecumsehs

**GREASY NEALE**  
London Tecumsehs

 8 year career .259 BA

 **Coach**

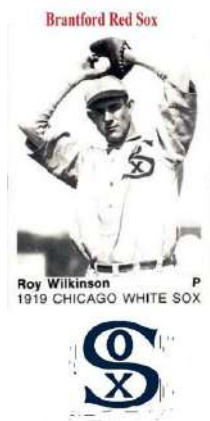



College = 25 years 82 wins  
NFL = Philadelphia Eagles 9 years  
NFL Champions 1948 & 1949  
College Hall of Fame  
Pro Football Hall of Fame

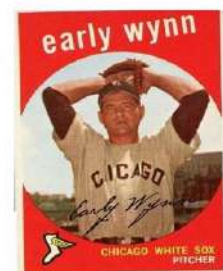
producing a career .259 batting average. He played football as well as baseball. When his playing days were over, he

coached college football, accumulating 82 wins. He then moved on to the Philadelphia Eagles of the NFL, winning the league championship in both 1948 and 1949. He is enshrined in both the College and Pro Football Halls of Fame.

Ray Wilkinson enjoyed a 6-year career in the American League. He threw the last pitch by a White Sox pitcher in a World Series until Early Wynn opened the 1959 World Series 14,966 days later. Both pitches were strikes. Wilkinson and Wynn also have other things in common. Both chose the same



14,966 Days



pose for their baseball cards in their World Series years. Both had high water marks of 23 wins in a season. And Early Wynn too has ties to the Canadian League in that he was scouted and signed by a Canadian League alumnus.

Seventeen Canadian Leaguers had major league careers of two to five years. Nine of these hit at or below the Mendoza Line. Of these, Wickey McAvoy had the

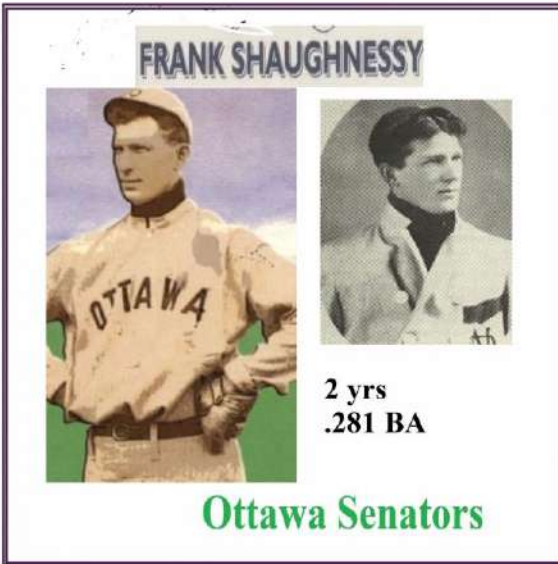
## The Mendoza Line

<b>.200</b>	<b>.200</b>	<b>.199</b>	<b>.197</b>	<b>.184</b>
				
<b>George Dunlop</b> <b>Brantford Red Sox</b>	<b>Frank Rooney</b> <b>Peterborough Petes</b>	<b>Wickey McAvoy</b> <b>Berlin Busy Bees</b>	<b>Bill Haefner</b> <b>Hamilton Hams</b>	<b>Doc Reisling</b> <b>London Tecumsehs</b>
<b>.167</b>	<b>.161</b>	<b>.145</b>	<b>.118</b>	
				
<b>Socks Perry</b> <b>London Tecumsehs</b>	<b>Archie Yelle</b> <b>London Tecumsehs</b>	<b>Jack Kustus</b> <b>St. Thomas Saints</b>	<b>Al Bashang</b> <b>Ottawa Senators</b>	

longest career, batting .199. Four of the others were pitchers. It should be noted that Mario Mendoza actually batted above the line named after him with a career mark of .215.

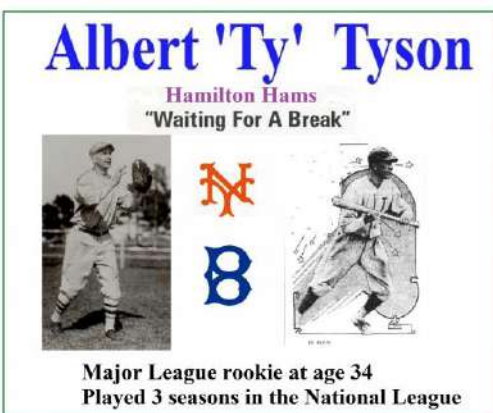
Frank "Shag" Shaughnessy had a short two-year Major League career as a player, batting .281. However he had a significant impact on the game in management. He was a minor league manager for 19 years. While doing this he also coached football. He became president of the International League in 1936 and held that position for 24 years. He created a system for playoffs that is universally used today. He has been inducted into the International League Hall of Fame, the

Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame and the Canadian Football Hall of Fame. He was



named "King of Baseball" in 1953.

Emilio Palmero was a Canadian League player who when he made it to the majors, technically broke the colour barrier long before Jackie Robinson. He was a Cuban of mixed race who identified as white, which was at that time referred to as "passing as white." Being from Cuba and coming out of Canada, his complexion was overlooked and he was referred to as being "olive skinned." He played in the majors for five years, and is in the Cuban Baseball Hall of Fame.



Ty Tyson was a career minor leaguer who used the Canadian League as a springboard to the majors, and is proof that persistence pays off. He was 34 years old when he finally broke in with the Giants, and then played three full seasons in the National League, batting .280 for his career.













Petie Behan and Jack Kading were two Canadian Leaguers who made it to the majors under unusual circumstances. Behan was a shortstop who was called up by the Phillies. He had never pitched in the minors, yet for his entire three-year major league career with the Phillies he was a pitcher. Jack Kading's switch was less dramatic. An outfielder in the minors, he played his entire big league career at first base, hitting .269 for two seasons.

### Switch Positions




<p><b>Guelph Maple Leafs</b></p>  <p><b>Petie Behan</b> Minor League shortstop 3 seasons as Major League pitcher.</p>	<p><b>St. Thomas Saints</b></p>  <p><b>Jack Kading</b> Minor League outfielder 2 Seasons as Major League first baseman</p>
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These five players also had decent careers in the majors:

### Meritorious Service

<p><b>St. Thomas Saints</b></p>  <p><b>Merlin Kopp</b> 3 yrs, 146 hits</p> 	<p><b>Hamilton Kolts</b></p>  <p><b>Cowboy Jones</b> 4 yrs, 25 wins</p> 	<p><b>Ottawa Senators</b></p>  <p><b>Rabbit Nill</b> 5 yrs, 204 hits</p> 	<p><b>Guelph Maple Leafs</b></p>  <p><b>Charles Boardman</b> 3 yrs, 3.06 ERA</p> 	<p><b>London Tecumsehs</b></p>  <p><b>Archie Yelle</b> 3 yrs, 87 games</p> 
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### SPITBALLER

	 <p><b>Cracker Jack BALL PLAYERS</b></p> <p>KEATING, NEW YORK - AMERICANS</p>
	<p><b>Ray Keating</b> Hamilton Kolts</p> <p>7 yr Major League career, 349 strikeouts</p>

There were seven Canadian Leaguers who had big league careers of between six and nine years.

Ray Keating was a spitballer who spent most of his seven-year career pitching for the Yankees when they were bad. The year the Yankees acquired Babe Ruth, Keating was

traded to the Boston Braves. Although he struck out 349 batters, he was wild and walked just about as many, resulting in a losing record.

Wickey McAvoy went straight from the Berlin Busy Bees to the majors as an 18-year-old rookie. The Athletics had high hopes for him, but he ended up as a backup for three different catchers in his six-year career. He appeared in two World Series, winning one. During his playing days he became friends with Babe Ruth. In 2020, his grandchildren decided to sell some of his Ruth memorabilia. The auction house sent the items to be authenticated but they “got lost in the mail.” The family sued but the auction house had better lawyers.

the UNDERSTUDY

Wickey McAvoy  
Berlin Busy Bees

Major Leaguer at age 18.  
6 Yr. career  
2 World Series - 1 winner  
Career BA of .199

Two men nicknamed “Heine” played in the Canadian League, and both made it to the majors. Heine Smith had the longer career, playing six years with a .232 batting average. In all, 22 major leaguers were nicknamed “Heine.” One, Heinie Manush, made it to the Hall of Fame. Three others were World Series Champions. There hasn’t been another Heine in the majors for the last 80 years, probably because people realized that giving German players a nickname that is an ethnic slur was not acceptable.

One in 22

Heine Smith  
Erie Yankees

6 yr career  
313 games  
One of 22 Heines  
to play in Majors

JACK SMITH

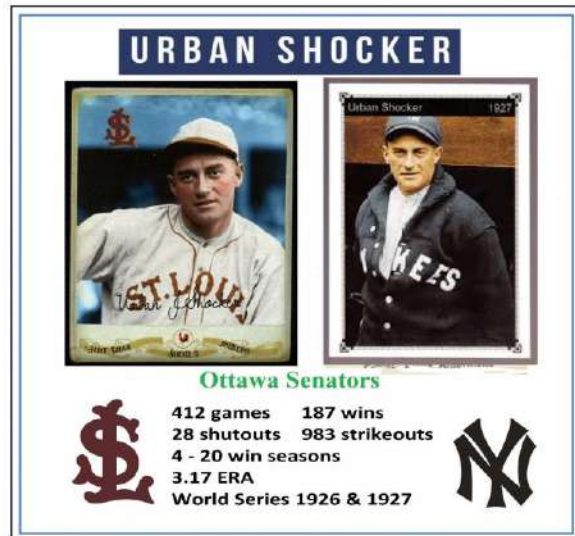
London Tecumsehs

1406 games 1301 hits  
293 extra bases 382 RBI  
.287 Batting Average

The longest Major League career of any Canadian Leaguer, 15 years, belonged to former London Tecumseh Jack Smith. Smith played 1,409 games in the National League with the Cardinals and the Braves, batting a very respectable .287. He batted over .300 in six seasons, and temporarily held the National

League record for most consecutive pinch hits. He is one of the very few major league outfielders to make an unassisted double play.

The most renowned Canadian Leaguer was Urban Shocker. He pitched for two years in Ottawa, winning 39 games, before moving up to the New York Yankees. After two seasons, he was traded to the St. Louis Browns. Yankee GM Ed Barrow



called that trade the biggest mistake of his career. In St. Louis, Shocker became a dominant pitcher for a very mediocre team. He won 20 games in four seasons, with a high water mark of 27 wins. The Yankees traded to get him back and he was part of the 1927 team often referred to as the greatest team ever. He did all this with a severe heart condition that would not allow him to lie down to sleep, and that killed him a little more than a year after his having won the World Series. His statistics are close to meriting Hall of Fame consideration, being superior to those of many Hall of Famers.

Despite surviving only five years and having a low classification, the Canadian League was able to produce some significant alumni. At the time, there were 41 minor leagues with hundreds of teams. The Canadian League was in the low minors, yet still produced many notable alumni. It is quite a remarkable achievement.

