

Sports Outlook

Book profiles northern baseball stars

Canadian boys of summer

Funny thing about baseball, the so-called national pastime of the US.

Some of the most outstanding players of the game have been, and are, Canadians - yet the American controllers of the sport seem to regard them in much the same way that Harold Ballard regards Soviet hockey players: They just don't belong.

Heroes, Bums and Ordinary Men - Profiles in Canadian Baseball, by Dan Turner (Doubleday Canada; 280 pages; \$24.95) is a collection of unrelated essays about living Canadians who have made a place for themselves in the history of the game that the Americans consider their own.

Turner, an Ottawa-based journalist, has travelled widely in the past couple of years to interview his subjects. Labatt Breweries of Canada, part owner of the Toronto Blue Jays, helped to underwrite his travel expenses, and the Blue Jays' management provided some necessary introductions. The date and place of each interview is displayed prominently at the

beginning of each essay.

The result is a colorful, highly anecdotal and impressionistic look at the game as it is remembered by some of those who have participated prominently in it over the past 60 years or so - most of them Canadians, but also several Americans who played in Canada.

TWO PITCHERS

Here are some of the participants who opened up and reminisced with Turner about their careers:

-Ferguson Jenkins, a farm boy from Blenheim, Ont. (near Chatham), an outstanding control pitcher who won 284 major-league games with the Chicago Cubs, Texas Rangers and Boston Red Sox in a career that ended in 1983, a career distinguished by his winning the Cy Young award as the outstanding pitcher of 1971. Turner calls Jenkins "the finest Canadian baseball player of all time," but although he was nominated for election to the Baseball Hall of Fame this year, he fell short of the required number of votes in balloting by baseball writers,

predominantly American.

-Ron Taylor of Toronto, a relief pitcher who saved World Series games for two championship teams - the 1964 St. Louis Cardinals and the 1969 New York Mets, without allowing an earned run. Taylor developed his pitching skills as a boy in the highly regarded baseball program in Leaside, a Toronto community, and played in the minors during the summers while doing a four-year electrical engineering course at the University of Toronto (graduating third in his class). After hanging up his spikes at age 34, he returned to his alma mater and embarked on a long and gruelling course in medicine. Today, Ron Taylor functions as the Toronto Blue Jays' team physician, and pitches at batting practice whenever time allows. With careers in three demanding fields - engineering, major-league baseball and medicine - Ron Taylor is a modern-day Renaissance Man.

BRIEF CAREER

-Reno Bertoia of Windsor was an outstanding hitter (for a time) who, like Ron Taylor, was determined to complete his education. He graduated from Assumption University while on the roster of the Detroit Tigers as an infielder. His career peaked early in the 1957 season when, for a few weeks, he was hitting almost .400, well ahead of Boston's famed Ted Williams. But his shining hour soon ended, he was traded to Washington and, before long, released. Now he heads the history department at Assumption High School.

-Phil Marchildon, originally from Penetanguishene, Ont., was a pitcher with a fastball that propelled him from a Sudbury-area team to the minor-league Toronto Maple Leafs and then, in 1941, to the hapless Philadelphia Athletics of the American League, where he shared the mound with Dick Fowler (1921-1972), a Toronto-born pitcher. In 1943, Marchildon (then 30) quit baseball to join the Royal Canadian Air Force, becoming a

tail gunner on Halifax bombers. He was shot down and spent a year in a German prison camp. Repatriated in 1945, Marchildon was forced back into the Philadelphia line-up by 83-year-old manager Connie Mack to boost the sagging attendance. The crowds turned out, all right - and they saw the out-of-condition pitcher injure himself almost immediately. Marchildon never regained his pre-1943 form.

WOMEN'S LEAGUE

-Helen Callaghan (now Helen St. Aubin of California) left Vancouver in 1943 to become a leading hitter in the newly formed All-American Girls Baseball league, with teams in Chicago and throughout its hinterland. Turner tells us less about the teams she joined and the positions she played than he does about her unremarkable 1979 car, but she seems to have been an outstanding player in a circuit that played high-calibre baseball. Her son, Casey Candaele, made it to the National league, with Montreal Expos and Houston Astros.

-Jim McKean of Montreal is now rated as one of the best umpires in the American League, after a notable career in the Canadian Football League (or at least as notable a career as a Canadian can have, playing a position - quarterback - that the CFL virtually reserves for Americans). Still only 42, McKean has spent 16 years in the AL, and he admits that the fun has gone out of baseball, as far as participants are concerned; those tirades by managers such as Billy Martin aren't faked, and umpires can tolerate only so much.

PERSONAL TOUCH

Heroes, Bums and Ordinary Men is rich in intriguing personal stories. It's certainly not a reference book - baseball already has plenty of those - but one wishes

that Turner had supplied a little more background facts in order to put the reminiscences in some kind of context.

And, since it was written about Canadian personalities in baseball, it would have been interesting if the author had explained why the Americans who run Canada's two major-league teams appear to have an aversion to using Canadian players. No effort was ever made to bring Fergie Jenkins, for example, or Houston's Terry Puhl of Melville, Sask., to the Canadian teams that they would undoubtedly have helped both on the field and at the gate.

Turner made a valid decision to limit his cast of characters to those whom he could interview, and it is fascinating to get their views in their own words. Readers interested in delving into the more distant reaches of Canada's association with baseball might seek out William Humber's Cheering For The Home Team, published in 1983 by Boston Mills Press, Erin, Ont.

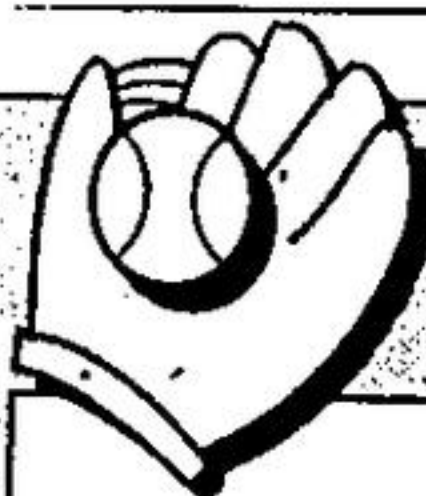
The Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, is mounting a special historical exhibition entitled Let's Play Ball, opening March 1, which highlights Canada's contribution as well as other aspects of baseball and its colorful history.

-Vincent Egan, an avid baseball fan, is the travel columnist for Thomson News Service.

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Andy Van Slyke, Pittsburgh	\$1,833,000	\$1,350,000	\$483,000
Joe Carter, Cleveland	\$1,630,000	\$1,150,000	\$480,000
Roger Clemens, Boston	\$2,360,000	\$1,900,000	\$460,000
Ron Darling, New York Mets	\$1,725,000	\$1,275,000	\$450,000
Tony Fernandez, Toronto	\$1,425,000	\$1,000,000	\$425,000
Orel Hershiser, Los Angeles	\$2,425,000	\$2,000,000	\$425,000
Dwight Gooden, New York Mets	\$2,079,000	\$1,675,000	\$404,000
Pete Incaviglia, Texas	\$828,000	\$475,000	\$353,000
John Franco, Cincinnati	\$1,300,000	\$950,000	\$350,000

*Some cases were settled by the two sides before reaching an arbitrator

NEA GRAPHICS



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