



Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 10

SUMMER 2002

NUMBER 2

Special issue!!

NATIONAL POLISH AMERICAN SPORTS HALL OF FAME

This issue of the *PGS-MN Newsletter* recognizes those athletes of Polish descent who have been elected to the National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame.¹

The NPASHF and Museum was founded in 1973 to honor and recognize outstanding American athletes of Polish descent, both amateur and professional. A Hall of Fame Room and Museum was established in the Dombrowski Fieldhouse on the campus of St. Mary's College, Orchard Lake, Michigan, located 25 miles northwest of Detroit.

Each year inductees are elected in nation-wide balloting by the NPASHF officers and Board of Directors, past members of the Hall of Fame, and more than 300 members who comprise the NPASHF Sports Panel Council.

Any athlete, male or female, of Polish American extraction (father or mother must be Polish) and meeting the eligibility requirements may be considered for nomination and induction. All amateur athletes are eligible; collegiate athletes not continuing into the professional ranks are eligible two years after their collegiate participation ends; professional athletes are eligible two years after retirement from the sport.

The NPASHF and Museum has memorabilia from many of the athletes who have been elected. These include: An autographed bat and 1963 St. Louis Cardinal cap and jersey from Stan Musial; Hank Stram's 1970 Kansas City Chiefs Superbowl jacket; an autographed basketball from Mike Krzyzewski; Dick Modzelewski's Cleveland Browns helmet; and many other items.

The NPASHF and Museum is open to the public for viewing by calling the curator, Fr. Jim Mazurek at (248) 683-0401. Anyone wishing to suggest a nominee for election should contact: NPASHF and Museum, 11727 Gallager, Hamtramck MI 48212.

¹The information on this page is mainly from the NPASHF website at <<http://www.polishsportshof.com>>.



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The *Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota Newsletter* is published quarterly in Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. Subscription to the *Newsletter* is included with membership. Dues are \$15.00 per year (See application form on the advertising insert).

Items submitted for publication are welcomed and encouraged. Deadlines for inclusion are: March 15, June 15, Sept. 15 and Dec. 15 respectively. Articles, letters, book reviews, news items, queries, ad copy, etc. should be sent to: Paul Kulas, editor, *PGS-MN Newsletter*, 12008 West River Road, Champlin MN 55316-2145 or to e-mail: <kkulas@ties.k12.mn.us>

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From the editor's desk . . .

I am usurping this space usually reserved for the President's letter. This issue marks the beginning of the tenth year that I have been involved with bringing this newsletter to you--I have been formatting and laying out this newsletter on my computer in a spare bedroom of my home since the preparation for the publication of the Summer 1993 issue.

You will notice that this issue of the newsletter differs a bit from past issues. It's articles contains more than a little nostalgia and whimsy and very little dealing with genealogy. This may not sit very well with some of our dedicated genealogy readers but others may welcome the change of pace. As editor, I always have tried to include more than just genealogy issues in these pages. Besides, after ten years doing this, I am in need of a little diversion.

This issue deals primarily with the National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame and Museum located on the campus of St. Mary's College in Orchard Lake, Michigan. In Spring 1996, I described my visit to the campus.¹ In that article I mentioned the NPASHF briefly and I promised a future article on the topic. Well, years have gone by and no such article has appeared--until now.

But while the articles in this issue deal very little with solving genealogy problems, they do indeed deal with genealogy--it is a requirement that all candidates for election to the NPASHF be of Polish descent. Also, the path that many of these athletes took to achieve their fame is really part of the Polish immigrant ethnic experience (See especially the interview given by Stan Coveleski beginning on page 20). There is a tendency among all immigrant groups for its young people to try to break out of the poverty of the ethnic ghetto by becoming professional athletes. Unfortunately very few are talented enough to achieve this. Most will find that getting a good education is a far surer way to achieve the American dream. Still, Polish Americans have had their share of very talented athletes. The NPASHF and this issue of the *PGS-MN Newsletter* honors those gifted few.

--Paul Kulas

PS: I am already working on the Autumn issue of the newsletter. It will be more traditional in content and will follow this issue shortly.

PPS: Thank you for allowing me to bring back memories of my childhood with this issue.

¹Paul Kulas, "Orchard Lake (Michigan) Schools Emphasize Polish Heritage," *Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota Newsletter* 4 (Spring 1996): 5-8.

National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame

Roll of Honor

The following is a listing of those who have been inducted into the NPASHF. They are listed by year of induction.¹

1973: Stan Musial--One of baseball's all-time greats and NPASHF's first inductee, "Stan the Man" compiled a career .331 batting average in 22 seasons (1941-1963) with the St. Louis Cardinals. He was named National League MVP in 1943, 1946 and 1948 and won seven National League batting titles including a career-high .376 in 1948. Stan is a member of the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown NY.

1974: Stella (Walasiewicz) Walsh--Polish-born Stella Walsh was one of the world's greatest women athletes. She won a gold medal in the 1932 Olympics (in the 100 meter dash) and silver in the '36 games.

Ted Kluszewski--"Big Klu" compiled a .301 batting average in 14 big league seasons. He hit .300 or better seven years in a row and had five consecutive seasons with 100 or more RBIs. In 1954, he led the National League with 49 home runs and 141 RBIs.

Ed (Tyrancki) Tyson--Considered to be one of amateur softball's greatest, Tyson starred for Detroit's famed Briggs Beautyware teams. He led Briggs to "World Series of Softball" titles in 1937 and in 1948 in twenty years with the team.

1975: Tony (Zaleski) Zale--The "Man of Steel" (before achieving boxing fame he worked in the Gary, Indiana steel mills) is considered by many to be the best middleweight ever. He won the middleweight

¹The biographical information in this article is mainly from the *1995 Induction Ceremony* booklet which I acquired during my visit to the NPASHF in that year; from Thomas M. Tarapacki, *Chasing the American Dream: Polish Americans in Sports* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1995); and from the NPASHF website at: <<http://www.polishsportshof.com>>. Also consulted were Mr. Tarapacki's sports columns in the *Polish American Journal* (all issues of the journal since 1980 are in the Polish Collection at the MGS Library) and Ben Chestochowski, *Gridiron Greats: A Century of Polish Americans in College Football* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1997).



At right: The reverse of the Stan Musial 1948 Bowman baseball card.

Stan Musial was the first inductee (1973) of the National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame (See the brief career summary at left).

At left: The obverse of the Stan Musial 1948 Bowman baseball card. It is one in my collection of cards that I acquired in the summer of 1948. I was 11 years old at the time. --PTK

36 — STAN MUSIAL

In- Outfielder--St. Louis Cardinals
Born: Donora, Pa. Nov. 21, 1920
Bats: Left Throws: Left
Height: 6:00 Weight: 175

Started his baseball career as a pitcher. Shoulder injury cut that short but he developed into an outstanding fielder. His stance at bat is something to see. Winding up like a windmill, he has made season averages of .347 and .337. In 1943 he won the Most Valuable Player award and again won the coveted award in 1946 with a batting average of .365. Three times an All Star.

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the three different flavors

BOWMAN GUM, INC. Copyright 1948

Stan Musial's 1948 Bowman baseball card.

crown in 1940 and 1948. He is most remembered for the vicious matches he had with Rocky Graziano (Tony won two of three).

Alex Wojciechowicz--"Wojie" was the center (he played beside guard, Vince Lombardi) on Fordham's famed "Seven Blocks of Granite" developed by the future Notre Dame coaching legend Frank Leahy. The No. 1 draft choice of the Detroit Lions in 1938, he played 13 seasons with the Lions and Philadelphia Eagles. He was a linebacker on the Eagles 1948 and 1949 championship teams and was elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1968.

Al (Szymanski) Simmons--"Bucketfoot Al" compiled a .334 lifetime batting average and hit .300 or better in eleven straight seasons. Voted MVP in 1929, he led the American League in batting in 1930 and 1931, hitting .381 and .390. He was elected to Baseball's Hall of Fame in 1953.

1976: Stan (Kowalewski) Coveleski-- Stan was one of the last of the major league's legal spitball pitchers (See his interview on page 20-21). During his 14 year major league career he compiled a 215-142 won-lost



February 1, 1947

To John Bulas,

kindest regards,
 sincerely,
 Johnny Lujack

Jerry Cowhig

Terry Brennan

Bill Walsh

Johnny Lujack (above) was one of my childhood heroes. At right is a note (dated February 1, 1947) that he wrote to my older brother. It was also signed by star halfback and future Notre Dame coach, Terry Brennan, center, Bill Walsh, and reserve Jerry Cowhig. This note started my interest in Notre Dame football and also started my childhood hobby of autograph collecting. Lujack was inducted into the NPASHF in 1978. --PTK

record with 2.88 ERA. He won 24 regular season games with the 1920 World champion Cleveland Indians. He also won three World Series games that year giving up a total of only two runs. Stan is a member of Baseball's Hall of Fame.

John (Krzyminski) Crimmins--During four decades, Crimmins won nearly 100 titles in major bowling tournaments. He averaged 195 in forty American Bowling Congress tourneys and won the first National All-Star bowling tournament in 1941.

Ted Marchibroda--A top collegiate quarterback, Ted led the nation in total offense with 1,813 yards in 1952. He also played professionally before launching a successful coaching career in the NFL in 1961. As head coach of the Baltimore Colts (1975-1979), his teams won three consecutive AFC East championships.

1977: Bill Osmanski--Dr. William Thomas (Bullet Bill) Osmanski was named All-America and starred for the famous 1937 undefeated Holy Cross football team. He delayed his career as a dentist to play for the Chicago Bears and led the NFL in rushing (with 699 yards) as a rookie in 1939. He played on four world championship teams in a seven-year career with the Bears.

Tom Gola--A four time All-American at LaSalle University from 1951-1955, Tom led his team to a NIT title in 1951 and to a NCAA crown in 1952. During a

ten year NBA career he was named All-Pro five times and led the Philadelphia Warriors to a World Championship in his rookie season.

1978: Johnny (Luczak) Lujack--An All-America quarterback at Notre Dame, Lujack led the Irish to three national championships (1943, '46, '47). He won the Heisman Trophy in 1947 and was also named "Athlete of the Year" by the Associated Press that year. He went on lead the NFL in passing with the Chicago Bears.

Eddie (Lopatynski) Lopat--A star pitcher for the great New York Yankee teams of the late 40s and early 50s, Eddie had 166 lifetime wins with an ERA of 3.21. In 1951, he won a career-high 21 games and in 1953 he went 16 and 4 and led the American League with a 2.42 ERA.

Ed Lubanski--A top tournament bowler, Ed won the World Invitational crown in 1958 and was named "Bowler of the Year" in 1959. He averaged 203.05 in 31 ABC tourneys and posted eleven sanctioned 300 games in his career.

1979: Al (Watras) Watrous--A top golfer in the 1920s, Al won the Canadian Open in 1922 and was runner-up to Bobby Jones in the 1926 British Open. He was also the World Senior Pro Champ in 1957 and won three U.S. Senior Pro championships in 1950, '51 and '57. Al had 13 holes-in-one during his pro career.

Bill Mazerowski--Perhaps the best defensive second baseman ever, Mazerowski won eight Gold Glove awards in 17 seasons with the Pittsburgh Pirates. However, he is probably best known for his dramatic World Series-winning home run in 1960. Bill is a member of the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Norbert (Szymanski) Schemansky--A three-time international weightlifting champion, Schemansky won his first world title in 1951. He achieved success in four different Olympics (1948, '52, '60, '64) winning a gold, a silver, and two bronze medals.

1980: Bill Skowron--"Moose" played 14 major league seasons (1954-1967, mostly with the New York Yankees) and compiled a .282 lifetime batting average with 211 home runs and 888 RBIs. He played in eight World Series (seven with the Yankees and one with the Dodgers) and was on the winning side in five of them.

Zygmunt Czarowski--An All-America tackle, "Ziggy" starred on three undefeated Notre Dame football teams (1943, '46, '47). The 1947 team is considered by many to be the best collegiate team ever.

Robert Gutkowski--As pole-vaulter for Occidental College, Gutkowski set a world record mark at 15 feet, 8 ¼ inches in 1957. He won a silver medal in the 1956 Olympics behind gold medalist, Bob Richards. He was also an outstanding long-jumper and sprinter.

1981: Steve Gromek--A pitcher, Gromek played 17 years (1941-1956) with Detroit and Cleveland compiling a 123-108 won-lost record with 3.41 ERA. After pitching mostly in relief for the '48 Indians, he out-pitched Johnny Sain in complete-game 2-1 victory over the Boston Braves in game 4 of the 1948 World Series.

Billy Golembiewski--"Billy G" won American Bowling Congress Masters championships in 1960 and 1962. He rolled five sanctioned 300 games and averaged 200 in 25 ABC tourneys.

Frank (Pajkowski) Parker--Parker ranked among the top ten U.S. tennis players for 17 consecutive years (1933-1949) and was the No. 1 ranked player in 1948. He won back-to-back U.S. Singles championships in 1944 and 1945.

1982: Tony Kubek--Tony earned American League Rookie of the Year honors in 1957 hitting .297. A shortstop on some of the great New York Yankee teams (1957-1965), he played in six World Series in his nine years with the Yankees. After injuries forced him to retire at age 29, he began a successful sports broadcasting career.

John Payak--An outstanding guard at Bowling Green in the 1940s, Payak went on to play pro basketball (1949 to 1954) with the NBA's Philadelphia and Milwaukee teams. He went on to 17-year career as a respected collegiate referee.

Edward Klewicki--An All-America defensive end at Michigan State, Klewicki played professionally with the Detroit Lions. He was a member of the 1935 NFL championship team.

Edmund Browalski--The founder of the National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame, "Big Ed" was a sports columnist for over 40 years with Detroit's *Polish Daily News*.

1983: Ron Perranoski--A premier relief pitcher for most of his career (1961-1973), Perranoski was one of the games first real "closer." He compiled a 79-74 career record with 179 saves and a 2.79 ERA. His best year was for the Dodgers in 1963 when he posted a 16-3 record with 1.67 ERA.

Stanley (Cyganiewicz) Zybyszko--Considered one of the world's foremost strongmen, Zybyszko won the world wrestling championship in 1921 and again in 1925. A native of Poland, he was a graduate of the University of Vienna and a lawyer, musician, philosopher, poet and master of 11 languages.

Ann Setlock--A top women's bowler with over 40 championships to her credit, Setlock rolled a sanctioned 300 game, a dozen 700-series including a Michigan record of 776. She was a member of WIBC championship teams in 1957 and 1959.

Warren Orlick--A golf professional for over fifty years, Orlick was named Pro Golfer of the Year in 1960. Known as "Mr. Rules," he is one of the foremost authorities on the Rules of Golf.

1984: Vince Boryla--All-America at both Notre Dame and Denver University, Boryla was a member of the gold medal-winning 1948 U.S. Olympic basketball team. He went on to pro basketball success as a player, coach and general manager.

Cass Grygier--Grygier began bowling in 1926 and rolled his first 300 game that year. He was a member of the Detroit Stroh's team that won an American Bowling Congress title and part of the team that won the International Doubles title in Berlin in 1936.

Stanley (Kiecal) Ketchel--A member of the Boxing Hall of Fame, the "Michigan Assassin" won the Middleweight Boxing Championship in 1908 and is generally considered to be one of the division's greatest champions. In 1909 he took on heavyweight champion, Jack Johnson, who enjoyed a 36-pound weight advantage. He had the champion on the floor but Johnson rose to KO Ketchel.

Best wishes
and
lots of love Paul,
Ed Modzelewski
Dick Modzelewski
(11)

A note from Ed "Big Mo" and Dick "Little Mo" Modzelewski mailed to me shortly after the 1951 football season. Ed was the older (but smaller) of the two brothers. Ed played fullback and Dick in the defensive line for the 1951 undefeated U. of Maryland football team. I still have the stamped self-addressed envelope in which this note was mailed. It is postmarked "College Park, MD" and dated "Jan 10, 1952." This means that it was mailed shortly after the Terrapins defeated the No. 1 ranked and until then undefeated U. of Tennessee in the Sugar Bowl on New Year's Day of that year. Dick went on to play Pro football and was inducted into the Professional Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio in 1985 and into to the NPASHF in 1986 (See below). --PTK

1985: Hank (Wilczek) Stram--One of pro football's most successful and innovative coaches, Stram's Dallas Texans won the 1962 AFL title and his Kansas City Chiefs defeated the Minnesota Vikings in Super Bowl IV in 1970. His record in 17 years of pro coaching was 131-97-10.

George Szypula--A star gymnast at Temple University, Szypula went on to coach at Michigan State. His gymnasts won 18 NCAA titles and 45 Big Ten honors and his Spartan squad won the NCAA title in 1958.

1986: Dick Modzelewski--"Little Mo" won the Outland Trophy as college football's top defensive lineman in 1952 with the U. of Maryland. He played 14 seasons in the NFL playing on championship teams in New York (1956) and in Cleveland (1964). He was one of the famed "Fearsome Foursome" defensive line with the Giants.

Carl Yastrzemski--In 23 years with the Boston Red Sox, "Yaz" collected 3,419 hits, 1,844 RBIs, and 452 home runs. He won the triple crown in 1967 leading the American League in hitting (.326), homers (44) and RBIs (121). He was named MVP in 1967 and he

won seven Gold Glove awards and was selected for the All-Star game 18 times. He is a member of Baseball's Hall of Fame.

1987: Jack Ham--All-America at Penn State, Ham went on to play 12 years (1972-1983) with the Pittsburgh Steelers earning All-Pro honors nine straight years. He played on four Super Bowl championship teams. To Steeler fans from the Polish Hill neighborhood in Pittsburgh, he was known as *Dobre Shunka* (sic)--"The great Ham."

Vic Janowicz--As a triple threat (running, passing and kicking) tailback at Ohio State and a safety on defense, Janowicz won the Heisman Trophy in 1950. He went on to play both professional baseball (Pittsburgh Pirates) and professional football (Washington Redskins).

Bob (Algustuski) Toski--Toski's greatest moment on the professional golf tour came when he won the World Championship of Golf in 1954. He later became one of golf's greatest teaching pros and authored three books and produced a video on the subject.

1988: Leon Hart--A three-time All-American, Hart played on four unbeaten Notre Dame teams (1946-1949) that won three national championships. He won the Heisman Trophy in 1949, one of only two linemen to ever win this prestigious award. In eight seasons with the Detroit Lions, he helped his team win three NFL titles and earned All-Pro honors for both offense and defense in 1951.

George "Whitey" Kurowski--A stellar third baseman for the St. Louis Cardinals (1941 to 1949), Kurowski was a three-time All-Star with a .286 lifetime batting average. His most memorable hit was a ninth inning, three-run homer in the 1942 World Series that sparked the Cardinals to the title over the New York Yankees.

Billy (Paczowski) Packer--An all-conference guard, Packer led Wake Forest to the final four in 1962. After becoming a basketball color commentator in 1972, he has earned the reputation as one of the most knowledgeable in the business.

1989: Greg Luzinski--In 13 seasons with the Phillies and the White Sox, "the Bull" collected 307 home runs and 1,128 RBIs. A four time All-Star, his best year was in 1977 when he hit .309 with 39 homers and 130 RBIs. He played in two World Series and in four All-Star games.

Frank Gatski--In his twelve year NFL career (1946-1957), "Gunner" played in 11 championship games and his team won eight of them. He was elected the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1985.

Leon Hart



1988 NPASHF inductee Leon Hart was another of my childhood heroes (See the 1948 Notre Dame team photo and autographs that he sent to me that are reproduced on pages 18 & 19). Hart won the Heisman Trophy (awarded each year to the most outstanding college football player in the nation) in 1949. Polish American players won this award three out of four years during this era (Johnny Lujack in 1947, Hart in 1949 and Vic Janowicz in 1950). While I was preparing this issue of the newsletter for publication, I learned of Hart's death in South Bend, IN on 24 September 2002 at age 73. --PTK

1990: Phil Niekro-- A baffling knuckleball pitcher, Niekro won 318 games in 24 seasons in the majors. He won 20 or more games three times including 23 wins in 1969 to lead Atlanta to the NL West Division crown. He is a member of Baseball's Hall of Fame.

Janet Lynn (Nowicki)-- Lynn won her first national figure skating championship in 1966 at the age of twelve! In 1969, she won her first of five consecutive U.S. National Titles and won a bronze medal in the 1972 Olympics.

Pete Banaszak-- In 13 seasons with the Oakland Raiders, Banaszak ran for 3,767 yards in 963 carries and caught 121 passes for 1,022 yards and scored 52 touchdowns. He scored two TDs in the Raiders Super Bowl IX victory over the Minnesota Vikings.

1991: Ron Jaworski-- In 17 years of pro football, "The Polish Rifle" completed 2,187 passes for 28,190 yards and 179 TDs. In 1989, he was named NFL Player of the Year for leading Philadelphia to a 12-4 record and a NFC title.

Mike Krzyzewski-- Since he began coaching at Duke in 1980, "Coach K" and his basketball Blue Devils have averaged 24 wins a season. His teams won back-to-back NCAA titles in 1991 and 1992.

Stanley Stanczyk-- Starting in 1946, Stanczyk won six consecutive world weightlifting titles. He won a Gold Medal in the 1948 Olympics and a Silver in 1952.

1992: Dan Abramowicz-- During his nine year NFL career, Abramowicz set a record for catching at least one pass in 105 consecutive games (1967-1974). With New Orleans in 1969, he led the league in receiving in 1969 with 73 catches for 1,015 yards. He finished his career with 369 receptions for 5,060 yards and 39 TDs.

Joe Niekro-- In 22 major league seasons, Niekro won 221 games including back-to-back 20 win seasons in 1979 and 1980. Joe and his brother Phil (a 1990 inductee, see above) won a combined 539 games--more than any other brother combination in major league history.

Tom Paciorek-- One of four brothers to play major league baseball, Paciorek hit for lifetime .282 average over 18 seasons (1970-1987) He hit for a career-high .326 for the Mariners in 1981 finishing second in the American League batting race that year..

1993: Steve Bartkowski-- An All-America quarterback at the U. of California, Bartkowski led the nation in his senior year with 182 completion for 2580 yards and 12 TDs. He was the No. 1 player selected in the 1975 draft and starred for the Atlanta Falcons for eleven years (1975-1985). He threw for 24,122 yards and 156 TDs in a twelve year pro career.

Len Ceglarski-- A member of the U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame, Ceglarski was All-America at Boston College and led the Eagles to the NCAA championship in his sophomore season. He was a member of the silver medal team in the 1952 Olympics. In 1972, he returned to B.C. as coach and when he retired in 1992 he was college hockey's all-time winningest coach with 673 victories.

Jim Grabowski-- A Big Ten rushing leader (2,878 yards) at the U of Illinois, Grabowski broke many of the school's rushing records held by Red Grange. He was Green Bay's number one pick and collected two Super Bowl rings in a five-year pro career.

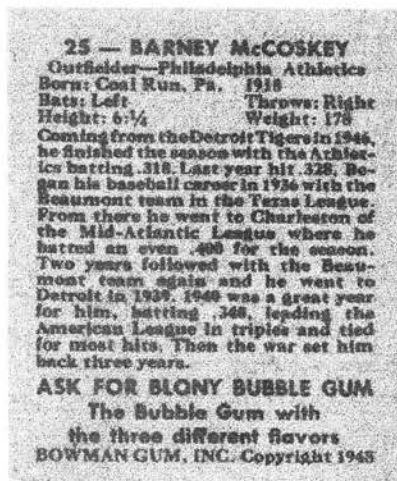
1994: Carol Blazejowski-- "Blaze" scored 3,199 points during her four-year basketball career at Montclair State, for an average of 31.7 points a game. She was a three-time All-America and collegiate Player of the Year in 1978. She captained the 1980 Olympic team and was elected to the Basketball Hall of Fame in 1994.



At left: The obverse of the Barney McCosky 1948 Bowman baseball card. It is another in my collection of cards which I collected in the summer of 1948. --PTK

At right: The reverse of the Barney McCosky 1948 Bowman baseball card.

Barney McCosky was a 1995 inductee of the National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame (See biographical sketch at right).



Barney McCosky's 1948 Bowman baseball card.

Lou (Majka) Michaels--A two-time All-America lineman at the U. of Kentucky, Michaels went on to a 13 year NFL career as a defensive end and placekicker. All-Pro in 1962 and 1963, he retired in 1971 as the NFL's fourth all-time leading scorer with 955 points. All but eight of those points came on extra points or field goals--he scored one TD with an intercepted pass and he sacked a QB for a safety.

Dick Szymanski--A four year starter at Notre Dame, Szymanski was the star linebacker on the 1953 national championship team. He played 13 seasons with Baltimore Colts and was named All-Pro in 1956, 1963 and 1965 and played on the Colts championship teams in 1958, 1959 and 1968 and in Super Bowl III in 1969.

1995: Edmund "Zeke" Bratkowski--As a star quarterback for the U. of Georgia, Bratkowski led the NCAA in passing yards in 1952 and in punting in 1953. He played 14 seasons in the NFL (Career stats: 762 completion for 10,291 yards and 65 TDs) and is best known as the "Super Sub" backup for Bart Starr in the Packers 1967 and 1968 championship years.

Barney McCosky--The speedy McCosky led the Detroit Tigers to a pennant in 1940 hitting .340 with 39 doubles and 19 triples. During his 11-year career (shortened by war-time military service) he compiled a .312 lifetime batting average.

Frank Szymanski--Szymanski played center and linebacker on the 1943 Notre Dame national championship team. He was the Detroit Lions' first draft pick in 1945 and played on the 1948 world champion Philadelphia Eagles.

1996: Bob Kurland--Basketball's first great seven-footer, Kurland lead Oklahoma A&M to back-to-back NCAA championships in 1945 and 1946 and was named All America three years in a row. He also played on the U. S. Gold Medal-winning Olympic teams in 1948 and 1952. Kurland rejected an offer to play in the newly-formed NBA and played for six years for Phillips 66ers leading the team to three Amateur Athletic Union championships.

Red Mihalik--A basketball referee, Mihalik had a remarkable career that spanned 40 years, including working six NCAA tournaments, three NIT tournaments and two Olympics. He worked some games in the NBA, but preferred the amateur and collegiate ranks. He was named the best basketball official in the United States in 1951.

Frank Tanana--A left-hander with a sizzling fastball, Tanana hurled 21 years in the major leagues and finished with a 240-236 won-lost record and a 3.66 ERA. He notched 2,773 career strikeouts to rank among the all-time leaders for left-handers.

1997: Stan Lopata--A catcher for the Phillies (1954-1960), Lopata's best year was in 1956 when he hit 32 home runs and 95 RBIs. He played in the 1955 and 1956 All Star Games.

Walt (Majka) Michaels-- Michaels (the brother of Lou, a 1994 inductee--see above) played 11 seasons (1951-1961) and coached for 20 years (1962-1982) in the NFL. He was a linebacker on a pair of NFL championship teams and five division winners for the Cleveland Browns and was named to four straight Pro Bowls (1957-1960). In 1972, he started a 10-year stretch as head coach of the Jets, being named Coach of the Year in 1978 and leading the team to the 1982 AFC championship game.

Frank Tripucka--After three seasons as back-up quarterback to two All-Americans and fellow Polish-Americans at Notre Dame (Frank Danciewicz in 1945 and Johnny Lujack in 1946 and 1947), Tripucka led the Irish to a 9-0-1 record in 1948. He moved on to a 15-year career in professional football (1949-1963): four in the NFL (Detroit Lions, Chicago Cardinals),



Another of my childhood heroes, Frank Tripucka led the Notre Dame football team to an undefeated season in 1948. He is the fourth player from those great post-war undefeated "Fighting Irish" teams (1946-1949) to be inducted into the National Polish Sports Hall of Fame (The others include: Johnny Lujack (elected in 1978) Ziggye Czarobski (1980) and Leon Hart (1988). Frank's son, Kelly, was a 2000 inductee into the NPASHF (see brief career summary below).

seven in the Canadian Football League (Saskatchewan Roughriders) and four in the AFL (Denver Broncos).

1998: Frank Kush--Kush was named All-America at Michigan State in 1952, the year the Spartans went undefeated in nine games and won the National Championship. Six years later, at age 28, was named head coach at Arizona State University. In 22 seasons (1958-79) he guided the Sun Devils to 176 wins, 54 losses and one tie. His teams were unbeaten in 1970 and 1975. He was named "Coach of the Year" in 1975. Kush coached the Baltimore Colts in 1983 and 1984 and moved with the team to Indianapolis in 1985.

Alan Trammell--Trammell played his entire major league baseball career (1977-1996) with the Detroit Tigers. A slick-fielding shortstop, Trammell appeared in 2,293 games, finished with 2,365 hits, 1,231 runs scored, 185 HRs and 1,003 RBIs. Defensively, "Tram" won four Gold Glove awards and was named to the American League All-Star team six times. He batted .300 or better seven times and in 1987 Trammell led

the Tigers to the AL East title by batting .343 with a career-high 28 homers and 105 RBIs.

1999: Moe Drabowsky--Born in Poland, Drabowsky's parents moved to the United States when he was three years old. In a 17-year major league career (1956-72), he pitched mostly in relief. His lifetime record was 88-105, however, he racked up a ton of saves long before major league baseball began compiling this important statistic. Drabowsky's greatest years were 1966 and 1970 when he helped the Baltimore Orioles win two World Series titles.

Joe Klecko--Selected by the New York Jets in the NFL draft, Klecko became a member of the "New York Sack Exchange," one of the most feared defensive front four in the early 1980s. In 1981 Klecko finished the season with 20 ½ sacks, was named to his first Pro Bowl team and was named NFL Defensive Player of the Year. He has played defensive end and tackle and nose guard, and was the first NFL player to be named to the Pro Bowl at three different positions.

Jenny Romatowski--Romatowski signed with the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League in 1946. She played in the league for nine years until it folded after the 1954 season. That year, Romatowski was named the league's all-star catcher and led the Kalamazoo Lassies to the AAGPBL championship. Romatowski later graduated from Eastern Michigan with a degree in physical education and taught for 28 years.

2000: Forrest Evashevski--"Evy" gained his most fame as the blocking back for All-American running back Tom Harmon. Evashevski turned down pro football to join the college ranks as a coach. As head coach at Iowa, he led the Hawkeyes to Big Ten titles and Rose Bowl victories in 1956 and 1958. In nine seasons his Iowa teams posted a 52-27-4 won-lost-tied record.

Betsy King--Betsy King was a superstar on the pro golf circuit and is a member of the Ladies Professional Golf Association Hall of Fame. She has 33 pro tournament victories, including two U.S. Opens. Before turning pro, Ms. King led Furman University to the women's NCAA golf championship in 1977.

Bob Skoronski--MVP and All-America his senior year at the U. of Indiana, Skoronski was drafted by the Green Bay Packers in 1956. He was a key part of an offensive line that included Forrest Gregg and Jerry Kramer on teams that were Super Bowl champs in 1967 and 1968.

Kelly Tripucka--Kelly followed his father Frank at Notre Dame and they became the first father-son combination to be inducted into the National Polish-American Sports Hall of Fame (see 1997, above). While Frank played football, basketball was Kelly's

sport. He was a four-year starter for the fighting Irish and All-America as a senior. Tripucka was a first round selection of the Detroit Pistons in the 1981 NBA draft and played 10 seasons in the pros. Tripucka once held the Detroit single-game scoring record with 56 points.

2001: Lou Creekmur--During his 10-year professional football career (1950-1959) as an offensive tackle for the Detroit Lions, Creekmur was selected six times to the All-Pro team and played in eight Pro Bowl games. He helped the Lions win three World Championships (1952, '53 and '57) and was elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1996.

Mike Ditka--An All-American tight end in 1960 at the U. of Pittsburgh, Ditka was selected in the first round by the Chicago Bears. He played in five Pro Bowls and had career totals of 427 reception, 5,812 yards and 43 TDs during his 12-year NFL career (1961-1972). Ditka was elected into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1988. He was head coach of the Chicago Bears (1982-1992) and of the New Orleans Saints (1997-1999). His

Bears won the Super Bowl after a 15-1 season record in 1985.

Allen Kulwicki--An engineering graduate of the U. of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, "Kwickie" was killed in a private airplane crash less than a year after winning the prestigious Winston Cup driving championship in 1992. When he won his first NASCAR race (the Phoenix 500) he celebrated with a "Polish victory lap"--driving backward around the track.

A note about the photos and superimposed autographs in this article: The photos of Johnny Lujack on page 4 and of Leon Hart on page 7 are from Ben Chestochowski, Gridiron Greats: A Century of Polish Americans in College Football (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1997), pp. 35 and 43. The photo of Frank Tripucka on page 9 is from Thomas M. Tarapacki, Chasing the American Dream: Polish Americans in Sports (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1995), p. 55. The reproduced autographs are copied from the 1948 Notre Dame team photo and autographs (see pages 18 and 19) sent to me by Leon Hart after the 1948 football season. --PTK

National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame Class of 2002

Johnny Podres, Pete Stenkowski and Mitch Kupchak were formally inducted into the National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame in August. Podres and Stenkowski were selected in nationwide voting, while Kupchak was chosen by the Hall's Veterans Committee.¹

Podres played 15 big-league seasons with the Dodgers--both in Brooklyn (1953-1957) and in Los Angeles (1958-1966), with the Tigers (1966-1967), and with the Padres (1969). He pitched the Dodgers to their first ever World Series Championship in 1955 at age 23, beating the New York Yankees in games three and seven. In game seven in Yankee Stadium, he shut out the Bronx Bombers, 2-0. He was named the World Series Most Valuable Player that year. After spending 1956 in the Navy, Podres led the National League in both ERA (2.66) and in shutouts (6) in 1957. In 1961, he won a career high 18 games and led the NL in winning percentage (.783). He was a three-time All-Star (1958, '60, '62) and had 148 career wins.

Stenkowski was a hard-hitting center for 15 seasons in the National Hockey League (1963-1978). The 6-foot-1, 210-pound Stenkowski played for the Toronto Maple Leafs, Detroit Red Wings, New York Rangers and Los Angeles Kings. He was a member of the

1967 Stanley Cup champion Maple Leaf team and he scored the magic 20 or more goals in a season five times. His career numbers were 231 goals, 378 assists and 609 total points in 1,050 regular-season and playoff games. His most productive season was in 1973-74 when he had 70 points on 25 goals and 45 assists for the Rangers. Stenkowski is now a radio and TV commentator for the San José Sharks.

Kupchak averaged double figures in both points and rebounds for the U. of North Carolina basketball team in 1975 and 1976. He was All-ACC selection as a junior and a senior and an All-America selection as a senior in 1976. He was also the ACC Player of the Year in 1976 as he sparked Carolina to a 25-4 record. Kupchak was the starting center on the gold medal-winning 1976 U.S. Olympic team and named to UPI's All-Olympic Team. Drafted by the Washington Bullets, he earned NBA All-Rookie honors in 1976. He won NBA championships with the Bullets and with the Los Angeles Lakers. Kupchak is currently the General Manager for the world champion Lakers.

The Class of 2002 brings Hall membership to 86 men and women. The Hall was founded in 1973 and Stan Musial was the first inductee.

¹Biographical information about the 2002 inductees is from the National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame's website at <http://www.polishsporshof.com> and from Tom Tarapacki's sports column in the *Polish American Journal* 91, no. 7 & 8 (August 2002 and September 2002): on page 7 in each issue.

National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame

The 2002 Nominees:

Below are short biographies of those individuals nominated for election to the NPASHF in 2002.¹ Each of the nominees has had a tremendous career in their respective sport and for that they all deserve recognition.

Eddie Abramoski--A longtime trainer for the NFL Buffalo Bills, Abramoski started with the team when it was formed in 1960 after serving at the U. of Detroit and part-time with the Detroit Lions. "Abe" holds two degrees from Purdue University and was honored by his peers in 1986 by being voted into the National Athletic Trainers Hall of Fame.

Bobby Czyz--Czyz compiled a 44-7 won-lost record during his 18-year (1980-97) professional boxing career, including 28 knockouts. He won the IBF Light Heavyweight championship in 1986 and the WBU Super Cruiserweight title in 1995. A member of Mensa, the organization for persons with high IQs, Czyz is now a national television boxing commentator.

Mike Gminski--Gminski started all four years at Duke and later played 14 seasons (1981-94) in the NBA. The 6-foot-11 center was a two-time All-American and still holds the Duke record for rebounds (1,242) and is third in scoring (2,323 points). He is only one of several pro players to score more than 10,000 points and haul in more than 6,000 rebounds.

Bobby Hurley--A two-time first-team All-American selection at Duke University, Hurley led the Blue Devils to back-to-back NCAA basketball championships in 1991 and 1992. The 6-foot point guard lettered all four years at Duke and was selected Final Four MVP in 1992. He was selected by the Sacramento Kings in the first round of the 1993 NBA draft (seventh overall), he played five seasons in the pros with Sacramento and Vancouver.

Mike Kenn--After a great career as an offensive tackle at the University of Michigan (1975-77), Kenn was a first round draft choice of the Atlanta Falcons. At 6-foot-7, 286 pounds, he starred in the NFL for 17 seasons and holds the team record for games started (243). He was named to five Pro Bowl teams.

John Kruk--Kruk batted an even .300 during his 10-year major league career (1986 - 1995) with the San Diego Padres, Philadelphia Phillies and Chicago White

Sox. Career stats: 1,170 hits with 100 home runs and 592 RBIs. He had best years as a Phillie first baseman and outfielder with career highs of 21 HRs and 92 RBIs in 1991 and a .323 average in 1992.

Mike Krukow--Krukow pitched 14 years in the big leagues for the Cubs, Giants and Phillies. He won 20 games (20-9) for the Giants in 1986 and then led the team to the Western Division title in 1987. He retired after compiling a 124-117 won-lost record with a 3.90 earned run average. He is now an analyst for the San Francisco Giants television network.

Bob Kuzava--Kuzava pitched in the majors for 12 years (1940-57) for the Indians, White Sox, Senators, Yankees, Orioles, Phillies and Cardinals. He was NY's bullpen ace with 68 saves over 3 World Series championship seasons (1951, '52 & '53) Two of his saves clinched Series titles. He also started for the Yankees and was one out away from a no-hitter in 1953.

Ted Kwalick--Kwalick was Penn State's first two-time All-American (1967, '68). The 6-foot-1, 225 pound tight end caught 86 passes for 1,343 yards in three seasons before being a first round selection of the San Francisco 49ers. He played eight years in the NFL and was second in receiving in the NFC in 1971 with 52 receptions. He played in three Pro Bowls and was also elected to the College Football Hall of Fame.

Arlene Limas--Arlene won gold in Taekwando when the Korean martial art debuted as a demonstration sport at the 1988 Seoul Olympics. The South Koreans dominated, winning three of the four gold medals awarded, but Arlene out-pointed her South Korean opponent to capture gold in the welterweight division. When the U.S. National Anthem failed to play during her award ceremony, she led the crowd in singing a rousing rendition. She won numerous other titles, including gold at the 1984 and '91 World Taekwando Championships.

Dan Marino--Marino earned All-America honors as a quarterback at the University of Pittsburgh. He was the first round pick of the Miami Dolphins in 1983 and passed for more than 2000 yards and 20 touchdowns as a rookie. He was selected a total of nine times for the Pro Bowl and during his 17 seasons (1983-1999) with the Miami Dolphins, Dan established 20 new NFL records, including career marks for total yards passing (61,361), touchdown passes (420), and pass completions (4,967).

Mike Munchak--An offensive guard at Penn State University (1979-81), Munchak won All-America honors and was selected in the first round by the Houston Oilers. He played in the Pro Bowl 8 times and spent his entire 14 year pro career with Houston. Munchak is now an assistant coach for the Tennessee Titans. He was elected to Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2001.

¹Biographical information about the nominees comes mainly from the NPASHF website at: <http://www.polishsportshof.com>

National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame *Who gets to vote??? An editorial. . .*

Early this year, I discovered the NPASHF website at <<http://www.polishsportshof.com>>. I have long followed the yearly election of new members to the Hall as regularly reported by Tom Tarapacki in his sports column in the *Polish American Journal*. In August of 1995, I visited the Hall and Museum, located on the campus of St. Mary's College in Orchard Lake, MI. I was very impressed. So when I read on its website-- "If you would like to find out how to become eligible to vote in the election, [click here](#),"--I was very interested and I quickly clicked. I was then presented with a message about joining that included "We invite anyone who is interested to check this site regularly for future details. . . . In meantime, further information is available by calling (313) 407-300 or e-mailing the NPASHF at d31@voyager.net." Well, after months of checking the site for additional information and with none forthcoming, I decided to send an e-mail inquiry to the indicated address. It turned out to be the e-mail address of Paul Paruk, Chairman of the Board of NPASHF. He informed me: "If you wish to be considered to become a voting member of the Sports Panel council please send to me your name, address, telephone number and a brief request in writing (include your involvement and/or interest in Polonia, sports, etc.) and I will forward it to the committee chair of the Sports Panel

Council." I did that and that was the last I heard. Evidently my application failed to impress.

When I visited the Hall and Museum in 1995, I was given a *23rd Annual Induction Ceremonies* booklet. The booklet states (p. 56): "The Sports Council Panel is a coast-to-coast collection of members of the media and interested fans as well as the officers and directors of the NPASHF and Hall of Famers themselves." It then goes on to list the members of the panel as it consisted in 1995 -- 317 total, with a huge majority from Michigan. There was only one listed from Minnesota. I believe in order for the NPASHF to be considered truly "National" and its Sports Council Panel membership to be considered truly "coast-to-coast," it needs to break out of its Michigan/Detroit basis (In fairness to the council, that membership list is from 1995--perhaps its membership base has expanded geographically since then). I think too, the large majority from Michigan on the panel is reflected in the many elected to the Hall that have Michigan/Detroit connections. Granted, the NPASHF may decide for itself who is eligible to vote in its elections. However, if they are unwilling to add to the electorate voting for the yearly inductees, they probably shouldn't advertise for new voters on their website. At any rate, I urge any PGS-MN members who are interested to request voting membership on the Sports Panel Council by submitting an application to Mr. Paruk via his e-mail address listed above. Perhaps you will have better luck than I did. --PTK

Nominees. continued from page 11

Tom Nowatzke--Nowatzke was the no. 1 draft choice in 1965 of both the NFL Detroit Lions and the AFL New York Jets after being an All-American fullback for the U. of Indiana Hoosiers. He played 4 years (1965-1969) with the Lions and 4 years (1970-1973) with the Baltimore Colts. He led Detroit in rushing in 1966 and scoring in 1967 and was the leading ground gainer in Superbowl V in 1970.

Neal Olkewicz--A team captain and MVP at the U. of Maryland, Olkewicz went on to play 11 seasons (1979 - 1989) as a middle linebacker for the Washington Redskins. "Olky" had a nose for the ball and came up with key interceptions, fumble recoveries and QB sacks. He won two Superbowl rings with Washington victories over Miami (1983) and Denver (1988).

Rudy Pikuzinski--The son of a Polish immigrant father, Rudy became one of the greatest indoor soccer players ever. Playing for the Canton Invaders of the National Professional Soccer League, he helped the team to four league championships. He also played in seven All-Star games and was league MVP for three straight years. Rudy was known for his deft scoring touch and his fierce competitiveness.

Johnny Podres--Podres was enshrined in the NPASHF in August (See page 10 for details).

Ron Reed--Reed played professionally in two sports after graduating from Notre Dame, where he was an All-America basketball player. He still holds the Irish season rebounding record with a 17.7 average in 1963-64. The 6-foot-6 forward played two seasons with the Detroit Pistons, then turned to baseball. Reed pitched 17 years in the major sand had a career won-lost record was 146-140 with a 3.46 ERA. He won 18 games in 1969.

Joe Restic--Restic was head football coach at Harvard for 23 years (1971-1993). His teams won five Ivy League titles and compiled a 176-97-6 record. A graduate of Villanova University, he coached the Canadian Football League and also played pro football for the Philadelphia Eagles and minor league baseball for the Philadelphia Phillies.

Pete Stenkowski--Stenkowski was enshrined in the NPASHF in August (See page 10 for details).

Leo Sugar--An all-America end at Purdue in 1951, Sugar starred in Chicago All Star and East-West Shrine games before nine-year career in NFL with the Cardinals, Eagles and Lions. He was an all pro on defense and started 99 consecutive games.

My Nominees. . . .

by Paul Kulas

The National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame and Museum invites those interested to suggest nominees for election to the NPASHF. To do this contact: National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame and Museum, 11727 Gallager, Hamtramck MI 48212. Here are my nominees:

Wayne Gretzky--In 1,487 regular-season NHL games, "The Great One," accumulated 894 goals, 1,963 assists and 2,857 points. He holds or shares 61 NHL records. He is a member of the Hockey Hall of Fame. He is also a Canadian. Does that make him ineligible for the National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame? If it does, I would argue that it should not. The term, "American," is not necessarily and should not be applied only to citizens of the United States. All of the lands in the New World were referred to as "America" long before the United States of America was established.

Polish Americans and Polish Canadians have a shared immigrant experience and a shared heritage. Canadian PGS-MN member, Shirley Mask Connolly, explored this link in several articles that have appeared in this newsletter.¹ She points out that Canada is physically closer to us than many parts of our own country. She states: "We speak the same language(s), practice the same faith, share the same surnames and live in a better world because of our Polish forefathers." Polish Americans and Polish Canadians are in a very real sense "cousins." Both Americans AND Canadians should be eligible for induction into the NPASHF.

When Gretzky was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1999, Ian (Scotty) Morrison was also inducted. In honor of his Scottish heritage, Morrison wore a traditional kilt to the ceremony. "Don't ask me that embarrassing question," Morrison told reporters at the time, "I'm not going to answer it." Gretzky could only shake his head and say "Thank God I'm Polish."

Tara Lipinski--Who can forget Lipinski's dazzling gold-medal performance at the 1998 Winter Olympics in Nagano, Japan? Shortly after the event, she announced her retirement from competitive skating--at age 15!! Does the fact that she skates professionally disqualify her for admission to the NPASHF? Again,

¹See for example, Shirley Mask Connolly, "Your Canadian Kashub Cousins and Their Trek from Wilno to Winona," *PGS-MN Newsletter* 3 No. 2 (Summer 1995): 5-7.

I would argue that it should not. Professional skating is more entertainment than athleticism (Skating in the Ice Capades or in a similar venue is not the same as skating in the Olympics). Her situation is analogous to the several NPASHF members who retired from their sport and then became sports broadcasters of that sport (or coaches or referees). That did not prevent their induction nor should professional skating prevent Tara's eligibility.

Then too, there is the issue of gender and sport balance in the NPASHF. Of the 86 inducted into the Hall only six are women (One of my votes would have been for Arlene Limas [see page 11] had I been allowed to vote in the 2002 election). The NPASHF does seem to have made an effort to include both women and also the participants of "minor" sports in the Hall. I applaud that. Still, men, football players and baseball players dominate the roster. The election of Lipinski would advance the representation of both women and participants in the more minor sports.

Emil Sitko--Having just argued for greater inclusion of women and minor sports participants into the Hall, I am now proposing a male football player for nomination! Readers of these pages will certainly

Emil Sitko



Notre Dame Running Back, Emil Sitko was another of my childhood heroes. Photo source: Ben Chestochowski, *Gridiron Greats: A Century of Polish Americans in College Football* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1997), 39. The reproduced autograph is from the 1948 team photo and autographs (see pages 18 and 19) sent to me by future NPASHF inductee, Leon Hart, after the 1948 football season.

notice that I was a big fan of Notre Dame football in my youth. I am very happy to see that four players (Lujack, Czarobski, Tripucka and Hart) from the unbeaten teams from 1946 to 1949 are on the Hall roster. However, there is one big omission--Emil "Red" Sitko. Sitko started (and stared) in each of those four seasons (the 17 year-old freshman, Leon Hart, may also have started some of the games in 1946 and therefore can also claim that honor).

Sitko was known as "Six-yard" Sitko while at Notre Dame--because he averaged better than six-yard per carry through-out his Notre Dame career (In his senior season in 1949, he average better than seven-yards per carry). Ben Chestochowski names Sitko to the first team of his all-time Polish American football teams.² Sitko also played (and stared) for the Great Lakes Naval Training Station team in 1943, a team that give the national champion Notre Dame team their only loss that season (College teams often played service teams during the war years). Sitko went on to play pro football with San Francisco in 1950 and with the Chicago Cardinals in 1951-52.

Harry Coveleski--Harry was the brother of 1976 NPASHF inductee Stan Coveleski (see page 3 and also Stan's interview on pp. 20-21). He was known as "Giant Killer" Coveleski for his success against the New York Giants while pitching for Philadelphia in 1908. Later, Harry won 20 or more games in three consecutive seasons pitching for the Detroit Tigers. He went 22-12 in 1914, 22-13 in 1915 and 21-11 in 1916. In his nine years in the big leagues, he won 81 games. Combined with Stan's 215 victories, the Coveleski brothers won 296 big league ball games. Until the Niekro brothers (NPASHF inductees Phil and Joe--539 wins) and the Perry brothers (Gaylord and Jim--529 wins) came along, Harry and Stan won more games than any other brother pitching combination. By comparison, the much more famous Dean brothers (Dizzy and Paul--"Me and Paul will win fifty games this year" boasted Dizzy in 1934--they won 49) won a combined career total 200 games.

Ed Modzelewski--As long as I am nominating a brother of a current NPASHF member, let me nominate another--Ed Modzelewski the brother of 1986 NPASHF inductee, Dick Modzelewski. During the 1951 season when both were playing for the University of Maryland Terrapins, Ed or "Big Mo" was much more well-known. I remember viewing the Sugar Bowl game on television following that 1951 season and

watching Ed run wild (153 yards rushing) against the No. 1 ranked and previously unbeaten Tennessee Volunteers. Maryland won 28-13 (See the copy of the note [on page 6] from Ed and Dick that I received from them after that win). Ed was a first round draft choice of the Pittsburgh Steelers. He played pro ball for the Steelers (1952) and for Cleveland (1955-1959).

Jim Peplinski--And as long as I am nominating Canadian hockey players (see Wayne Gretzky above) let me nominate Jim Peplinski. Jim is the son of past PGS-MN member, Des Peplinski. I met both Des and Jim when I attended a Peplinski family reunion in Barry's Bay, Ontario, Canada in 1995.³ Jim was the captain of the 1989 Stanley Cup champion Calgary Flames. In 711 games over 11 seasons with Calgary, Peplinski scored 161 goals with 263 assists for 424 points.

³Paul Kulas, "A Trip to Polish Canada (and to Polish Michigan and Wisconsin)," *PGS-MN Newsletter* 3 no. 3 (Autumn 1995): 5-8.

National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame

2002 Ballot Results:

Here are the vote totals for each nominee in the 2002 election. Dan Marino "declined acceptance at this time." We would be interested in knowing why. Maybe someone from the NPASHF can enlighten us on this matter.

1. Dan Marino* 271
2. Johnny Podres 174
3. Pete Stemkowski 158
4. Mike Munchak 131
5. Mike Gminski 125
6. Ted Kwalik 123
7. Tom Nowatzke 105
8. John Kruk 101
9. Bobby Hurley 100
10. Bobby Czyz 93
11. Mike Kenn 84
12. Ron Reed 80
13. Bob Kuzava 69
14. Joe Restic 67
15. Eddie Abramoski 63
16. Arlene Limas 54
17. Rudy Pikuzinski 47
18. Mike Krukow 43
19. Leo Sugar 41
20. Neal Olkewicz 33

²Ben Chestochowski, *Gridiron Greats: A Century of Polish Americans in College Football* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1997), 39-41.

The Great "Bronco" Nagurski of Football Fame!

114	13 Nov. 1908	Bronislaw Nagourski	4 Nov. 1908	Nicholai Nagourski Michelina Nagourski
		<small>Matrimonium Contractum cum</small>		<small>Quando</small>

Bronko Nagurski's baptismal record (left hand side of the page): It is the 114th record. The date of baptism is 13 Nov. 1908. The name is *Bronislaw Nagourski* (a later notation states "The Great 'Bronco' Nagurski of football fame!!"). The date of birth is 4 Nov. 1908. The parents are *Nicholai Nagourski* and *Michelina Nagourski*.

<i>Mike Baczynski</i> <i>Maria Sawczuk</i>	<i>Nap Deslandes</i>	<i>Bronko Nagurski</i> <i>born Nov. 3rd 1908</i> <i>& baptized shortly</i> <i>afterwards at Rainy</i> <i>River</i>
<small>Ubi</small>	<small>Attestans</small>	

The continuation of Bronko Nagurski's baptismal record (on the right hand side of the page). The godparents are *Mike Baczynski* and *Maria Sawczuk*. The name of the priest is *Nap. Deslandes*. In the annotations column is a later appended note which gives a different birth date than the original record (*Nov. 3rd, 1908*).

What about

Bronko Nagurski?

Contrary to popular belief, Bronko Nagurski was Ukrainian and not Polish. But was he? The *Encyclopedia of Ethnicity and Sports in the United States* reports he was born "Brownislaw Nagurs'kyj." On one of my genealogy research trips to the LDS Family History Library in Salt Lake City, I succeeded in finding his baptismal record (see above). It states that he was baptized "Bronislaw Nagourski." More interestingly, he was baptized in a Latin-rite Roman Catholic church in Rainy Lake, Ontario, Canada.

Those of us who do genealogical research in the Polish/Ukraine area of Europe know that Ukrainians are not likely to be Roman Catholic. They are usually Ukrainian Orthodox, or Russian Orthodox, or--in areas closer to Poland--Greek Catholic (the so-called "Uniate" Church that is loyal to Rome but uses the Orthodox liturgy). Being Roman Catholic in the Ukraine suggests Polish ancestry.

Now, it is entirely possible that Bronko's parents chose to have him baptized in a Roman Catholic church because there was no Orthodox or Greek Catholic church in the rural area in which they lived. Maybe one of our members from the Rainy Lake area of Minnesota/Ontario (the International Falls, MN area) who perhaps knew the Nagurski family, can enlighten us on the religious background of the family.

What about Paul Giel?

While searching the records of a parish in rural Poland recently (at my local LDS Family History Center), I noticed the frequently occurring *Giel* surname. Could it be a Polish surname? I came home and checked Hoffman's *Polish Surnames: Origins and Meanings*. Sure enough, it is listed (occurring 695 times in Poland in 1990--Hoffman notes, however, that it is also a German surname). Could the "Winona Flash" be of Polish or Kaszub ancestry? Certainly Winona is a heavily Polish/Kaszubian city. Maybe one of our members from the Winona area can enlighten us on the ethnic background of the Giel family.

January 4, 1952

Dear Paul:

I received your letter, and it was really swell of you to write. It makes a fellow feel pretty good to have boys like you pulling for him.

Thanks again for your letter. I really enjoyed hearing from you.

Best wishes to you from

Paul Giel

Above is a copy of a letter (reduced in size to better fit the page) that I received from Paul Giel after the 1951 football season. When I wrote to him I should have asked him about his ethnic background.

My All-Time Polish American Baseball Team

by Paul Kulas

Along with collecting baseball cards and collecting autographs of famous collegiate football players, another childhood hobby of mine was selecting various "dream teams." I annually selected an All-America football team (the selections were usually quite bold and differed greatly from those that appeared in the newspapers-- Notre Dame players were usually prominent and frequently a St. John's (MN) player would also make the team. I would also pore over baseball record books and pick the "all-time" teams of the various big league baseball teams (There were only sixteen teams back then). It occurs to me that if one could put out on a field the baseball players inducted into the NPASHF, it would be one heckava team. Here then is my all-time Polish American baseball lineup:¹

Player	position	Bats	Year ²	Team	Games	BA ³	SA	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	R	RBI	SB	FA
Barney McClosky,	cf	L	1940	Det A	143	.340	.430	589	200	39	19	4	123	57	13	.983
Alan Trammell,	ss	R	1987	Det A	151	.343	.551	592	205	34	3	28	109	105	21	.971
Stan Musial,	dh	L	1948	StL N	155	.376	.702	611	230	46	18	39	135	131	7	.981
Al Simmons,	rf	R	1930	Phi N	138	.381	.708	554	211	41	16	36	152	165	9	.990
Carl Yastrzemski,	lf	L	1967	Bos A	161	.326	.622	579	189	31	4	44	112	121	10	.978
Whitey Kurowski,	3b	R	1947	StL N	146	.310	.544	513	159	27	6	27	108	104	4	.954
Ted Kluszewski,	1b	L	1954	Cin N	149	.326	.642	573	187	28	3	49	104	141	0	.996
Stan Lopata,	c	R	1956	Phi N	146	.267	.535	535	143	33	7	32	96	95	5	.983
Bill Mazerowski,	2b	R	1958	Pit N	152	.275	.439	567	156	24	6	19	69	68	1	.980

Now that is an extremely tough batting order for an opposing pitcher to face. Seven of nine hit over .300 and three led their league in hitting in the year selected. Seven had more than 20 home runs and five hit more than thirty. Six had more than 100 RBIs and three led their league in that year. An indication of how really tough this batting order is, is that Ted Kluszewski with his league leading 49 HRs and 141 RBIs does not hit higher than seventh in this line-up. He probably should be placed a spot or two higher but I wanted to alternate left and right handed hitters through-out batting order.

Note that I am using the American League designated hitter rule here. A critic might ask: "Why are you putting Musial at dh when he was a very fine defensive outfielder? With Musial in the outfield, you could insert Greg Luzinski in the dh role and get a league-leading 120 RBIs and an additional 34 HRs into the line-up." That is a very good point and I probably would do that against left-handed pitching in order get more right-handed power in the batting order. However, using Musial at dh has several advantages. 1) Musial played both first base and in the outfield during his career (He played 1896 games in the outfield and 1016 at first). He could therefore rotate with the others in those four positions during the course of a season without having to change the batting order. 2) The team lacks a genuine lead-off hitter with Musial in the outfield and Luzinski at dh. Putting Musial at dh opens a spot in the outfield and at the top of the batting order for the speedy Barney McClosky. 3) McClosky was an very fine defensive center fielder. With him at that position, along with Mazerowski at second and Trammell at shortstop, the team has exceptionally fine "up-the-middle" defense--a characteristic of every really good baseball team.

The pitching staff is also very impressive.

Player	T ⁴	Year	Team	W	L	Pct.	ERA	G	CG	IP	H	BB	SO	ShO	Relief Pitching		
															W	L	Sv
Stan Coveleski	R	1920	Cle A	24	14	.632	2.49	41	26	315	284	65	133	3	1	0	2
Moe Drabowsky	R	1969	KC A	11	9	.550	2.94	52	0	98	68	30	76	0	11	9	11
Steve Gromek	R	1945	Cle A	19	9	.679	2.55	33	21	251	229	66	101	3	0	1	1
Eddie Lopat	L	1951	NY A	21	9	.700	2.91	31	20	234	209	71	93	5	0	0	0
Joe Niekro	R	1979	Hou N	21	11	.656	3.00	38	11	264	221	102	119	5	0	0	0
Phil Niekro	R	1974	Atl N	20	13	.606	2.38	41	18	302	249	88	195	6	0	0	1
Ron Perranoski	L	1963	LA N	16	3	.842	1.67	69	0	129	112	43	75	0	16	3	21
Johnny Podres	L	1961	Bkn N	18	5	.783	3.74	32	6	182	192	51	124	1	2	0	0
Frank Tanana	L	1975	Cal A	16	9	.640	2.62	34	16	257	211	73	269	5	0	0	0
*Harry Coveleski	L	1915	Det A	22	13	.629	2.45	50	20	312	271	87	150	1	4	2	4

This pitching staff includes two (Stan Coveleski and Phil Niekro) who have also been inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown. Notice I added a pitcher (* Harry Coveleski) to this list of pitchers that is not a member of the NPASHF. I did this because I think he deserves admission (see page 13) and also because I needed another left-handed pitcher on my staff.

I probably will want to include two lefties (probably Lopat and Tanana) in my starting rotation. The other three spots will probably go to right-handers Stan Coveleski and Phil and Joe Niekro. My starting rotation then would look like this: Stan Coveleski, Eddie Lopat, Phil Niekro, Frank Tanana and Joe Niekro. This rotation would have the righties and the lefties alternating and would also put the hard-throwing Tanana between the junk-throwing Niekro brothers.

My bullpen then would include left-handers Podres, Perranowski and Harry Coveleski and right-handers Drabowsky and Gromek. My relief corps would look like this: right-handed long reliever--Moe Drabowsky, left-handed long reliever--Harry Coveleski, right-handed set-up man--Steve Gromek, left-handed set-up man--Johnny Podres, and closer Ron Perranoski. Perranoski was one of the games first real closer. He led the league in saves two years in a row with the Minnesota Twins--in 1969 and 1970 with 31 and 34 respectively.

The reserves are:

<u>Player</u> , <u>position</u>	<u>Bats</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Team</u>	<u>Games</u>	<u>BA</u>	<u>SA</u>	<u>AB</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>2B</u>	<u>3B</u>	<u>HR</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>RBI</u>	<u>SB</u>	<u>FA</u>
Bill Skowron, 1b	R	1960	NY A	146	.309	.539	538	166	34	3	26	91	95	2	.991
Tony Kubek, if	R	1960	NY A	147	.273	.401	568	155	25	3	14	77	62	3	.969
Greg Luzinski, of	R	1975	Phi N	161	.300	.540	596	179	35	3	34	85	120	3	.966
Tom Paciorek, of	R	1981	Sea A	104	.326	.509	405	132	28	2	14	50	66	13	.974

These reserves give the team excellent "off-the-bench" hitting (as if the power-packed starting lineup would ever need pinch-hitting). Also, Tony Kubek provides the team with excellent "utility-man" service with his ability to play any infield position. An obvious weakness here is the lack of left-handed pinch-hitters. Perhaps the Minnesota Twins "Pole Patrol" can be of help here. Corey Koskie, Doug Mientkiewicz and A. J. Pierzynski are all left-handed hitters. But because they are still active (and will be for a long time) they are not eligible for admission to the NPASHF as yet.

There is one more team deficiency that should be addressed--the need of a "back-up" catcher. Here the NPASHF roster provides an answer. While Vic Janowicz was elected to the Hall primarily on the basis of his football abilities, he also briefly played big league baseball as a catcher and third basemen for the Pittsburgh Pirates (1953 & 1954). He would be an adequate back-up catcher, at least until A. J. becomes eligible.

¹All statistics listed are from *The Baseball Encyclopedia*, 10th ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1996). Numbers in bold print are league-leading figures for that particular year.

²The year selected is the "career year" for each player--the year when that player achieved his best statistics. With players of this caliber it is often difficult to choose which year was the player's best. Musial, for example won the NL batting average title seven times, slugging average--six times, led the league in hits--six times, doubles--eight times, triples--five times, runs scored--five times and RBIs--twice.

³The explanation of the column heading abbreviations follows: BA, Batting Average; SA, Slugging Average; AB, At Bats; H, Hits; 2B, Doubles; 3B, Triples; HR, Home Runs; R, Runs scored; RBI, Runs Batted In; SB, Stolen Bases; FA, Fielding Average.

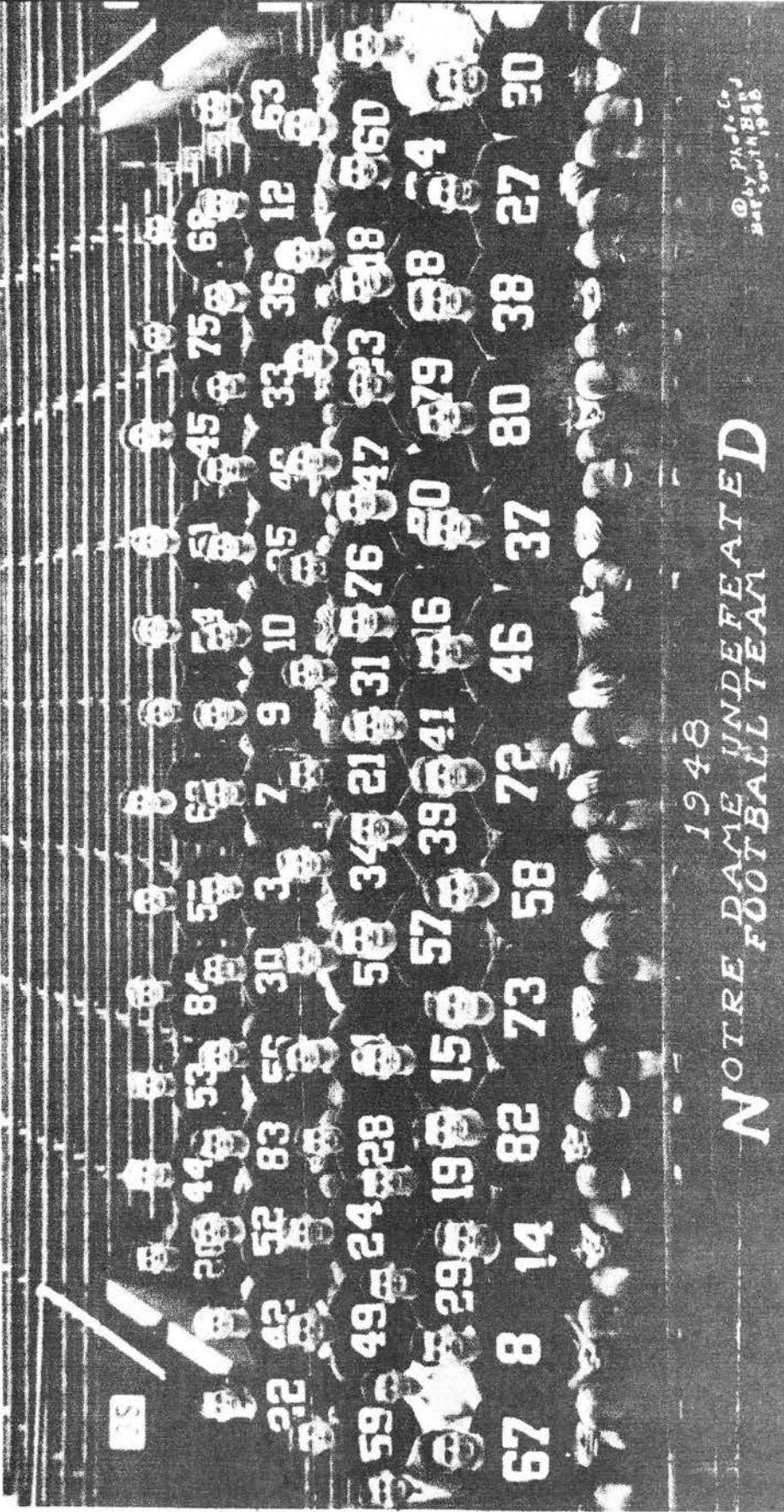
⁴The explanation of the column heading abbreviations follows: T, Throws; W, Wins; L, Losses; Pct., Winning Percentage; ERA, Earned Run Average; G, Game pitched in; CG, Complete Games; IP, Innings Pitched; H, Hits allowed; BB, Bases on Balls allowed; SO, Strikeouts; ShO, Shutouts; Sv, Saves.

Overleaf: The undefeated 1948 football team. This photo and the accompanying reproduced signatures was sent to me by future NPASHF member, Leon Hart after the 1948 football season. The hand written note above the picture reads: "Sincerest Best Wishes, Paul, and Good Luck, Leon Hart" Notre Dame went undefeated for four straight years (1946 to 1949). Hart and fellow NPASHF member Frank Tripucka are seated in the front row, forth and second from the left. Seated between them is another Polish American, Emil Sitko. I am nominating Sitko for induction (see page 13).

Polish American athletes played a big role in the success of the "Fighting Irish" during those glory years following World War II. Besides Hart, Tipucka and Sitko, other players with Polish or Slavic sounding names on this '48 team include: Steve Oracko, Alex Lesko, Al Zmijewski, Ed Hudak, Phil Yanoschik, Ernie Zalejski, Ted Budynkiewicz, Emil Ciechanowicz and Mike Swistowicz.

I also have a similar team photo and signatures of the 1951 Notre Dame team that includes future NPASHF member, Dick Szymanski. --PTK

Lincoln Post Mishko, Paul, and Fred Luck, Len Hart-



© by Photo Co. 247 South 1948

NOTRE DAME UNDEFEATED FOOTBALL TEAM 1948

- FRONT ROW L to R - PANELLI, TRIPUCKA, SITKO, HART, GAUL, WENDELL, FISCHER (CAPT), WALSH, BRENNAN, CIFELLI, MARTIN, ESPENAN, L. SMITH.
- SECOND ROW L to R - MICHAUD (mgr.), MADDEN (mgr.), DAILER, MCGEE, E. SMITH, LALLY, ORACKO, FLYNN, LESKO, MAHONEY, SCHWARTZ, WALLNER, BRICKSON, NOLAN (mgr.).
- THIRD ROW L to R - ZMIJEWSKI, HUDAK, COUTRE, SPANIEL, HIGGINS, JEFFERS, SAGGAU, CONNOR, Joseph FALLON, Sr. MARIE, HELWIG, DICKSON, JOHNSON, GROOM.
- FOURTH ROW L to R - GAY, WAYBRIGHT, GROTHAUS, WIGHTKIN, YANOSCHIK, LANDRY, SOISSON, BEGLEY, WILLIAMS, WHITESIDE, PEARSON, Mc KILLIP, JONARDI, FRAMPTON, ZALEJSKI, BUDYNKIEWICZ.
- FIFTH ROW L to R - MCGEEHEE, HOLMES, FEIGL, CIECHANOWICZ, SWISTOWICZ, HUBER, CARTER, CANTWELL, COTTER, MURPHY, PALMISANO and FALLON.

- Henry Bagley
- Frank ...
- Tom Claster
- Jack Joffe
- John Vanelli
- Gene Smith
- Jack ...
- Edward ...
- George Dickson
- Alex ...
- Bill ...
- Walt ...
- Emil ...
- Gene ...
- Doug ...
- Emil ...
- Charles ...
- Tom ...
- Bill Fischer
- Mike ...
- Bill ...
- Bill ...
- Ted ...
- Lyle ...
- Marty ...
- Philip ...
- Joe ...
- Bee ...
- Jim ...
- Lue ...
- Agay ...
- Bill ...
- Larry ...
- Johnny ...
- Tom ...
- Stephen ...
- Dick ...
- Coy ...
- Frank ...
- Frank ...
- John ...
- "Roby" ...
- Al ...
- Jerry ...
- Phil ...
- Bob ...
- Lank ...
- Tomas ...
- Emie ...
- Fred ...
- Laurence ...
- Jack ...
- Jim ...
- Phil ...
- Bob ...
- Ralph ...
- Jack ...
- Bill ...
- Jack ...
- Ed ...
- Ray ...
- Ed ...
- Edward ...
- Bob ...
- Jack ...
- Gordon ...
- Rene ...

An Interview with Stan Coveleski:

The Glory of Their Times: The Story of the Early Days of Baseball Told by the Men Who Played It by Lawrence S. Ritter (New York: Macmillan, 1966) is one of the classics of baseball literature. Between 1962 and 1966, Ritter interviewed 22 baseball heroes of his youth. Many were over eighty years old at the time. Among those interviewed was NPASHF member, Stan Coveleski. The son of Polish immigrants, Coveleski went from the Pennsylvania coal mines to Baseball's Hall of Fame! This is his story--in his own words. . . .

Had four brothers, all ballplayers. Oldest was Jacob, a pitcher. Killed in the Spanish-American War in 1898. They say he could throw a ball fast as you could hit one. Next was Frank. Got the rheumatism. Played with an outlaw league in Philadelphia. The rheumatism ended that. John, he tried out with the A's. Eddie Collins beat him out. Then Harry and me. Five of us. I'm the youngest.

Harry and me, we both made it to the Big Leagues. Harry was a lefty and I was a righty. Harry started first. He was four years older than me. He signed with the Phillies in 1905 and they optioned him to Lancaster in the Tri-State League. That's where he was when the Phillies recalled him in September of 1908. Harry came up and beat the Giants three times in one week, and knocked them right out of the pennant.

Most people think it was Merkle lost the 1908 pennant for the Giants. Well they're wrong. It was Harry Coveleski. He was just a rookie, but he beat the Giants three times in the last week of the season. Pitched every other day for a week, and beat them three in a row. That was *after* the Merkle business and *that's* what lost the pennant for McGraw that year. The Giants would have won the championship if they'd beat Harry even one of those three games.

"Giant Killer" Coveleski they called him after that. They say McGraw never forgave Harry for that. A lot of nonsense. They also say that the Giants ran him out of the league next season. Something about harmonicas or bologna or something. Supposed to have gotten Harry's goat. What a lot of bull that story is.

Nobody ever ran Harry out of any league. What happened is that he got hurt the next season. Went back down to the minors for a few years. But his arm came back later, and he came back up with Detroit and did fine. He was with Detroit when I was with Cleveland. They always wanted us to pitch against each other, but we refused. Wouldn't do it. And they never forced it. Hard to say what would have happened if they had.

Actually, Harry beating the Giants three times in 1908 probably changed *my* life more than it did his. See, I never played much baseball when I was a kid. How could I? When I was twelve years old I went to work in the coal mines.

I was born in 1890 in Shamokin, Pennsylvania. That's anthracite country, about halfway between Scranton and Harrisburg. When I was twelve years old I was working in the mines from seven in the morning to seven at night, six days a week. Which means a 72-hour week, if you care to figure it up. For those 72 hours I got \$3.75. About 5¢ an hour. There was nothing strange in those days about a twelve-year-old Polish kid in the mines for 72 hours a week at a nickel an hour.

What was strange was that I ever got out of there. Like I said, I never played much baseball in those days. I couldn't. Never saw the sunlight. Most of the year I went to work in the dark and came home in the dark. I would have been a natural for night baseball. Never knew the sun came up any day but Sunday.

But every evening after I got home I'd throw stones at tin cans. I don't know why. Just for something to do, I guess. Heck, we didn't have any television then, or radio, or automobiles, or even a telephone or electric lights. Had to do *something*. So I threw stones. I'd put a tin can on a log, or tie it to a tree, and stand maybe 40 or 50 feet away and throw stones at it. Did that every night till it was time to go to bed. I did that for so many years I could hit one of those things blindfolded.

Well, the semi-pro team in town heard about me being so good throwing stones at tin cans and they asked me if I'd like to pitch for them. That was in 1908, when I was eighteen. Of course, maybe being Harry's kid brother had something to do with it, too. Then, before I knew what hit me, I was signed to a contract with Lancaster, and I was out of those damn mines for good.

Never forget leaving home for the first time to go play with Lancaster. It was the first time I ever rode on a train. Had to get a new suit of clothes to go off to the big city, but was too bashful to buy it. So Mom and Dad went to town, picked one out, and brought it home to fit it on me. Then when I got to Lancaster I was too shy to eat in the hotel with the rest of the team. I'd go to a hot-dog stand and eat by myself instead. Pay for it out of my own pocket. After a couple of weeks some of the players got suspicious, never seeing me around. So one day they followed me and caught me eating my hot dogs. After that they made me go to the hotel dining room with them. I'm glad they did.



Baseball Hall of Famer Stan Coveleski.

Photo source: Lawrence S. Ritter, *The Glory of Their Times: The Story of the Early Days of Baseball Told by the Men Who Played It* (New York: Collier Books, 1974), 114.

I pitched for Lancaster for a few years, then went up for a trial with the Athletics late in 1912. With Connie Mack. Connie was a good manager. He was a very considerate man. If you did something wrong, he'd never bawl you out on the bench, or in the clubhouse. In the evening he'd ask you to take a walk with him, and on the way he'd tell you what you'd done wrong.

One day Connie called me in and told me I was to start that day. My first Big League game. I was a little nervous, but not too much. Hell, I'd been around by then. Four years in the Tri-State League. I figured I could do the job. Ben Egan caught me. Remember Big Benny? "All you have to do is throw it right to me," Ben said. "I'll give you a good target. Just aim for my glove."

So that's what I did. Pitched a three-hitter. I aimed at Big Benny's glove, and it was just like throwing stones at tin cans. I didn't know the batters. Hadn't been there long enough to learn their weaknesses. All I knew was to aim at his glove. But that was enough. I *always* had good control. From throwing those stones. You know, once--with Cleveland, later on--I pitched seven full innings without throwing a single ball. Every pitch I threw was either a strike or was hit by the batter. Not one pitch in seven innings that wasn't over the plate.

I did OK in that trial with the Athletics--won two and lost one. But I couldn't break into that pitching staff Connie had then. Chief Bender, Eddie Plank, Jack Coombs, Herb Pennock. Don't know who could have beat them out. So Connie sent me back to the minors, out to the Coast.

I put in two years with Spokane, and then one with Portland in the Pacific Coast League, and I guess that year with Portland--1915--was the turning point. I was twenty-five years old, was in my seventh year in the minors, and was starting to wonder if I'd *ever* make it to the Big Leagues. I had good control, a good curve, a good fast ball, and a good slow ball. But evidently that wasn't enough.

One day I was watching one of the Portland pitchers throwing spitballs. "By Gosh," I said to myself, "I'm going to try to throw that."

I started working on the spitter, and before long I had that thing down pat. Had never thrown it before in my life. But before that season was over it was my main pitch, and the next year I was up with the Cleveland Indians. That pitch--the spitball--kept me up there for 13 years and won me over 200 games.

I got so I had as good control over the spitball as I did over my other pitches. I could make it break any of three ways: down, out, or down and out. And I always knew which way it would break. Depended on my wrist action. For the spitball, what you do is wet these first two fingers. I used alum, had it in my mouth. Sometimes it would pucker your mouth some, get gummy. I'd go to my mouth on *every* pitch. Not every pitch would be a spitball. Sometimes I'd go maybe two or three innings without throwing one. But I'd always have them looking for it.

They outlawed the spitter in December, 1920. Said only certain established spitballers could continue to throw it after that. Me and sixteen others was all. Maybe the great year I had in 1920 had something to do with it. I don't know. They wanted to shift the odds more in favor of the batter.

Well, that's the way it is in baseball. I enjoyed playing ball. But it's a tough racket. There's always someone sitting on the bench just itching to get in there in your place. Thinks he can do better. Wants your job in the worst way: back to the coal mines for you, pal!

The pressure never lets up. Doesn't matter what you did yesterday. That's history. It's tomorrow that counts. So you worry all the time. It never ends. Lord, baseball is a worrying thing.

Genealogy: Collecting

by Paul Kulas

I didn't intend for this issue of the newsletter to be completely about sports. I envisioned an article or two about the National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame and then the usual genealogy subject matter in remaining space. But sometimes--usually--the content of an issue evolves considerably as it is being laid out. That is what happened with this newsletter.

One's interests and hobbies also evolve over time. In my youth, I collected baseball cards of professional baseball players and autographs of collegiate football players. I have long put away (but saved) those childish things. Oh, I still follow professional baseball a little--this year's Minnesota Twins excited me a bit. And I still follow college football, though I now follow the "Fighting Johnnies" instead of the "Fighting Irish" --though this year's Tyrone Willingham team has tweaked my interest some. But instead of collecting baseball cards and autographs, I now collect information about my ancestors. . . and I have for over thirty years.

About the time I was putting away my cards and autographs (about the time I was entering high school), I found my grandfather's obituary among some papers that my parents had saved. It fascinated me. It stated that he was born in Posen (sic), Poland. I now had his specific place of origin in Poland--or so I thought. Poland! What an exotic place! I knew then that someday (when I would have a little money) I would go to Posen and try to trace my Polish ancestry. Little did I know then that Posen/Poznań was not only a very large city but was also the name of a province at the time my grandfather lived there. Posen covered a very large geographical area. I was going to need a better clue about my grandfather's village of origin than what was given in his obituary.

I completed high school, went to college, served in the Army, started teaching, got married, had children--but still the idea of tracing my Polish roots was in the back of my mind. Then, in 1968, my search began in earnest. Again, as when I started collecting autographs (see page 4), it was my older brother, John, who provided the impetus. He was now a professor of German at St. John's University and in 1968 he returned from his first of many visits to Germany. While there he visited relatives in Bavaria. He also visited parish offices in ancestral villages and compiled information from church records tracing my mother's Bavarian ancestors. He brought this information back home with him. I was amazed! Records of our ancestors--some back to

Eltern	Onkeltern	Urgroßeltern	2
27 Vater	7	8 Petrus	16
	Adalbert	Kisimowski	17
	Kisimowski	9 Anthonia	18
	geb. Kisimowski	geb. Kurasz	19
28 Mutter	5	10 Antonius	20
	Adalbert	Kubicki	21
	geb. Kisimowski	11 Anna	22
	Stammlin?	geb. Kurasz	23
(Die 3. Zeile hier: 2. u. 3. Zeile mit denen der Seiten 6 - 7 überein)			
29 Mutter	8	12 Adalbert	24
	Kisimowski	Kulas	25
	geb. Kisimowski	13 Franziska	26
	geb. Kisimowski	geb. Kobot	27
	geb. Kisimowski	14 Petrus	28
	geb. Kisimowski	Kunz	29
	geb. Kisimowski	15 Anthonia	30
	geb. Kisimowski	geb. Kubicki	31

the 1700s--still existed! We have since traced some lines back to the early 1600s.

While in Germany in 1968, my brother also visited some of my dad's relatives. My grandfather's half-sister and her husband had left Poland and had settled in the Ruhr industrial area of Germany. Their children and their families still lived there and our families had remained in contact. During the Nazi years these relatives carried identity papers (to prove that they were not Jewish) and when one family member was drafted into the German army, the government investigated his ancestry back four generations. My brother bought copies of those records back home with him. Copies of two of those documents are shown at left and be-

low. I now had information to begin my Polish genealogical research.

There was little available information about Polish genealogical research back in 1968. Very little had been published as yet. There was no PGS-MN to help and no Polish Collection at the MGS library. There was no internet to browse. I learned by doing the research. I discovered the existence of LDS Family History Centers. They were just beginning to film in Poland then. The records of the Archdiocese of Poznań was one of their first filming projects. That filming made the records of most of my Polish ancestral parishes available to me. I have since traced most of my Polish ancestral lines back to the late 1600s.

At right is a copy of a birth certificate (Geburtsurkunde) of my great-grandfather, Adalbert (Wojciech) Kulas. Translation: (Registry office: Parish office in Hanswalde--Number 50/1839) Adalbert Kulas on 10 April 1839 in Pustkowie-Witki Kreis Krotoschin was born. Father: Andreas Kulas Mother: Franciszka nee Kokot. The form was completed in Raschkau, on 10 September 1940. It is signed by a government official.

Notice the Nazi swastika on the stamp. This document was completed when a relative was drafted into the German army and the government investigated his ancestry back four generations (see chart at left). It was these records that provided the clues needed to find my family's place of origin in Poland. It took me awhile to figure out just where exactly Hanswalde (now Janków Zalesny) and Pustkowie-Witki were located.

Geburtsurkunde

(Standesamt Pfarramt in Hanswalde -- Nr. 50/1839)

Adalbert Kulas

ist am 10 April 1839

in Pustkowie-Witki Kreis Krotoschin geboren.

Vater: Andreas Kulas

Mutter: Franciszka geborene Kokot

Änderungen der Eintragung:

Raschkau, den 10. September 1940

Der Standesbeamte
F. Peter

At left is the ancestry chart compiled from the documents required upon induction into the German army in 1940. The chart begins with the inductee, (1) Stanislaus Wisniewski--my father's first cousin. The next line shows his parents, (2) Anton Wisniewski and (3) Marianne Kulas (Marianne was my grandfather's half-sister). The next line lists the grandparents of Stanislaus (on this line only (6) Adalbert Kulas is an ancestor of mine--my grandfather and his half-sister, Marianne, had the same father but different mothers). The next generation shown are the great grandparents of Stanislaus (Notice that the compiler makes a mistake here; the father of Adalbert Kulas is not Adalbert but Andreas Kulas--see the document above). Stanislaus Wisniewski was captured on the Russian front and died in a Russian POW camp in 1946--almost a year after hostilities had ended.

Missing Branches:

QUERIES, Send to: **Paul Kulas**, editor, *PGS-MN Newsletter*, 12008 West River Road, Champlin, MN 55316-2145 or to e-mail: kkulas@ties.k12.mn.us

NEW MEMBERS: We welcome the following:

Steve Holupchinski, 2218 N. Ariel St., N. St., Paul MN 55109 <weaverll@hotmail.com> is researching KUKA, KUKLOCK in Falkowice, Opole and in Morrison Co., MN.

Kevin and Mary Ann Johnson, 3210 - 139th Lane NW, Andover MN 55304 <kmmmkjohnson@msn.com> are researching KREZESZEWSKI, KRISKE, KUBISKI, KUBICKI, OLSZEWSKI, MANIAK, BUTKIEWICZ, CIESIELSKI in Poland and in Minnesota and New York.

J Patrick Klave, 318 North 5th St., Grand Forks ND 58203-3799 is researching KLAWA, KALKA, PRUSKI, GAZIOR in Kashubia or Prussian Poland and in Warsaw, ND. Johan Klawa 1843-1926, immigrated around 1884.

Norbert F. Kowalczyk, 3125 Hennepin Ave., Mpls. MN 55408 is researching KOWALCZYK, ROMANSKI in Galica and in Winona and Royalton in MN. (This is a gift membership from PGS-MN member Albert Kowalczyk.)

Hub Levandowski, 1116 - 10th Ave. No., St. Cloud MN 56303 is a new member.

Kay Martin, 5325 Forest Rd., Minnetonka MN 55345 <dekjmartin@world.att.net> is a new member.

Shirley Opatz, P.O. Box 342, Little Falls MN 56345 is a new member.

Paul Warzecha, 919 E. Courthouse St., Cuero TX 77954 is researching WARZECHA, KUTCHKA, GOLA, SCHULTZ, KAMINSKI, MIGURA in Upper Silesia and in Texas, Chicago and Minnesota.

Tom Woychick, 2885 S. Swallowtail Ln., Boise ID, 83706 <rondolefty@aol.com> is researching Simon WOJCIK/WOYCHICK/WOYCHIK in Poppelau in Poland and in Independence, WI and Maria KISTOWSKA (parents: Jacobus KISTOWSKI and Anna EICHMAN) in Winona, MN.



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