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Black Sox II

Lead: Persistent rumors about a fixed 1919 World Series led to the indictment of eight Chicago White Sox players.

Intro.: A Moment in Time with Dan Roberts.

Content: White Sox owner Charles A. Comisky was notorious for being tightfisted with his players. He even charged them for their laundry.

In September 1919 pitcher Eddie Cicotte and first baseman Chick Gandil met former White Sox pitcher turned Texas oil speculator Sleepy Bill Burns and Philadelphia gambler Billy Maharg met in a New York hotel room. The price was \$100,000 to throw the series, but the plan began to fall apart almost immediately. The biggest problem involved the players themselves. To throw a game requires great coordination and this crew wasn't that smart. The eight were so talented that their poor performance was transparently obvious. Something was going on. Probably their consciences, particularly Joe Jackson's, their innate sense of fair play, and their competitive spirit defeated the conspirator's plans.

An enlivened Cincinnati team took full advantage of the confusion in the White Sox ranks and won the series five to three. Despite their later acquittal for lack of evidence, the eight players were banished for life from the major leagues. The most important result of the so-called Black Sox scandal was the appointment of a baseball commissioner with wide powers, Federal Judge Kennesaw Mountain Landis, who ruled the sport with an iron hand for two decades and helped restore its damaged reputation.

At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.

Resources

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