

Computer games decide debate

BEST EVER

*Simulated series helps determine
which baseball team is the greatest*

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The Globe and Mail

If it is possible to produce a quiet 114-win season, the 1998 New York Yankees did it. Lost in the din of the Mark McGwire-Sammy Sosa home run derby, the Yankees posted a remarkable 114-48 record on their way to their second World Series championship in three years. If their series win was seen as inevitable, so was the debate that followed: Are they baseball's greatest team ever and if not, who is?

With the help of Strat-O-Matic CD-ROM Baseball, The Globe and Mail will have some fun around the best-ever debate. There will be a single-elimination tournament featuring 16 of baseball's greatest teams. Each week, starting today, we will publish a recap of a computer-simulated seven-game series and by the spring we'll have our champion.

Two teams that invariably come up in such a discussion are the 1927 Yankees and the 1975-76 Cincinnati Reds. Baseball historians generally cite 1920 as the end of the deadball era and the beginning of modern baseball. That being the case, the Yankees got a head start on the best-ever argument, with six American League pennants from 1920-28. The '27 edition, featuring Babe

Ruth and Lou Gehrig, won 110 games with a winning percentage of .714. The Big Red Machine of the mid-1970s, led by Johnny Bench, Pete Rose and Joe Morgan, won consecutive World Series in '75 and '76.

All told, 16 teams will vie for the title of baseball's best. Teams built on pitching and defence, such as the 1970 Baltimore Orioles, will compete with the power-laden 1961 Yankees. The Oakland A's, winners of three consecutive world championships in the early seventies, could face the 1993 Toronto Blue Jays. The 1952-56 Brooklyn Dodgers produced four National League pennants and one series victory, yet toiled in the shadow of the Yankee teams of the same era.

The '54 Cleveland Indians are the only team that failed to win the World Series that are worthy of laying claim to the title of baseball's best ever, thanks to their .721 winning percentage.

Baseball is a game of numbers. Because of this, such cross-generational comparisons are possible. While the deadball era produced some great teams (the 1906 Chicago Cubs won 116 games) and many great players, it will not be represented in our tournament. The game played at that time was a different brand of baseball alto-

gether. The use of livelier baseballs, the outlawing of spitballs and the construction of hitter-friendly stadiums transformed the game into the modern version of baseball we know today.

1927 YANKEES WIN New York clinches Series in six

Lazzeri blasts two-run homer to end hopes of 1934 Cardinals

SERIES A

1927 Yankees v. 1934 Cardinals

The 1927 New York Yankees were 110-44 for winning percentage of .714. They defeated Pittsburgh 4-0 in the World Series. Hall of Famers on the team included Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Herb Pennock, Waite Hoyt, Earle Combs and Tony Lazzeri. The 1934 St. Louis Cardinals were 95-58 for a .621 winning percentage. They defeated Detroit 4-3 in World Series. Hall of Famers included: Frankie Frisch, Dizzy Dean, Dazzy Vance, Joe Medwick and Jessie Haines.

The 1934 Cardinals led the National League in runs, doubles and batting, but they were no match for the 1927 Yankees in this series. The Cardinals were only able to muster a .223 batting average

with two home runs against the underrated Yankee pitching staff. New York lived up to its Bronx Bomber moniker, posting 33 runs on its way to defeating St. Louis in six games.

For 14 innings the Cardinals defied the odds and kept the Yankees off the scoreboard. Following Dizzy Dean's opening game shutout win, Cardinal pitcher Bill Hallahan held the Yankees in check until the sixth inning of Game 2. But a Lou Gehrig three-run double, followed by Pat Collins's grand slam, which broke the game — and perhaps the series — wide open. New York's 8-3 win evened the series at one game each.

Game 3 saw the Yankees amass 16 hits and 13 runs as Cardinal pitcher Paul Dean didn't make it out of the third inning. Urban Shocker went the distance in the Yankees' 13-1 victory. Dizzy Dean came back to start Game 4 on three

days rest, but was outpitched by George Pipgras as the Yankees took a 3-1 lead in the series.

Brothers Paul and Dizzy Dean both contributed as St. Louis staved off elimination with a 6-5 win at Sportsman's Park. Paul, pitching in relief, snuffed a Yankee rally in the seventh inning, while Dizzy led off the bottom of the inning with a pinch-hit walk, eventually scoring the game-winning run. Yankee Babe Ruth belted two home runs and posted two outfield assists in defeat.

Game 6 featured a pitching dual between Paul Dean and New York's Dutch Ruether. A Gehrig leadoff home run in the seventh inning held up until Medwick's two-out single scored Pepper Martin in the bottom of the ninth. The score remained tied until Lazzeri's two-run homer in the bottom of the 11th clinched the game and the series for New York.

YANKEES 4, CARDINALS 2

Game one: St. Louis 5, New York 0
Game two: New York 8, St. Louis 3
Game three: New York 13, St. Louis 1
Game four: New York 4, St. Louis 0
Game five: St. Louis 6, New York 5
Game six: New York 3, St. Louis 1

1927 YANKEES TEAM BATTING

Name	BAVG	GM	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	BB	SO
L.Gehrig,1b	.409	6	22	6	9	3	1	2	8	5	6
M.Koenig,ss	.385	6	26	7	10	0	1	0	1	1	2
B.Ruth,of	.364	6	22	5	8	0	0	4	10	5	4
P.Collins,c	.333	5	18	2	6	1	0	2	7	3	2
E.Combs,of	.292	6	24	5	7	1	0	0	0	4	2
J.Dugan,3b	.240	6	25	2	6	1	0	0	0	1	2
B.Meusel,of	.167	6	24	2	4	1	0	0	2	3	7
T.Lazzeri,2b	.136	6	22	2	3	1	0	1	3	5	9
J.Grabowski,c	.000	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
C.Durst,ph	.000	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M.Gazella,ph	.000	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

Team totals .260 6 208 33 54 8 2 9 31 28 43

Stolen Base: Meusel (1)

Error: Koenig (1), Dugan (1), Meusel (1), Lazzeri (1)

1934 ST. LOUIS CARDINALS

Name	BAVG	GM	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	BB	SO
F.Frisch,2b	.500	6	26	2	13	2	0	0	1	0	0
B.Whitehead,ph	.500	2	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
C.Fullis,of	.375	3	8	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
J.Medwick,of	.273	6	22	1	6	1	0	0	3	3	4
R.Collins,1b	.250	6	24	2	6	0	1	1	3	1	3
J.Rothrock,of	.240	6	25	2	6	1	0	0	4	0	2
L.Durocher,ss	.211	6	19	2	4	0	0	0	0	2	2
S.Davis,c	.143	2	7	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
P.Martin,3b	.080	6	25	4	2	0	0	1	2	1	2
B.Delancey,c	.071	5	14	0	1	1	0	0	1	3	4
E.Orsatti,of	.000	4	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1

Team totals .223 6 197 16 44 6 1 2 14 13 22

Stolen Base: Frisch (1), Fullis (1), Martin (1)

Errors: Frisch (1), Durocher (1), Martin (1)

1927 NEW YORK YANKEES TEAM PITCHING

Name	ERA	W	L	G	GS	CG	SH	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
W.Moore	0.00	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	4.1	3	0	2
G.Pipgras	0.00	1	0	2	1	1	1	0	11.0	8	6	7
U.Shocker	1.00	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	9.0	5	1	4
D.Ruether	1.04	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	8.2	7	1	2
B.Shawkey	3.00	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	3.0	2	1	1
H.Pennock	3.00	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	9.0	7	1	3
W.Hoyt	6.30	0	2	2	2	0	0	0	10.0	12	3	3

Team totals 2.13 4 2 6 6 3 1 0 55.0 44 13 22

1934 ST. LOUIS CARDINALS TEAM PITCHING

Name	ERA	W	L	G	GS	CG	SH	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
D.Vance	0.00	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0.1	2	0	0
J.Mooney	0.00	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0
D.Dean	1.50	1	1	2	2	2	1	0	18.0	14	7	15
B.Walker	4.26	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	6.1	5	7	3
T.Carleton	6.00	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	6.0	5	2	5
B.Hallahan	7.36	0	1	2	1	0	0	1	7.1	5	4	7
P.Dean	7.59	0	1	3	2	0	0	0	10.2	15	5	12
J.Haines	12.60	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	5.0	2	3	1

Team totals 5.30 2 4 6 6 2 1 1 54.1 54 28 43