

By Mark Herrmann
STAFF WRITER

Babe Ruth dug in against David Wells, the pitcher who idolizes him. Wells, the free spirit, let it fly. Ruth, the free spirit, let it rip, and the ball sailed into the rightfield seats.

That two-run shot in the bottom of the first inning helped send the 1927 Yankees to a 5-3 win over the 1998 Yankees in Game 7 of a Dream Series computer matchup. The Murderers' Row Yankees defended their consensus status as The Greatest Team of All Time, at least on a screen.

When you're talking about a place in history, perhaps it is not so awful to be a game out of first. That was the fate of the '98 Yankees, who surrendered a three-games-to-two lead in the series played with a special edition of the Strat-O-Matic CD-ROM baseball game.

Lou Gehrig was the Series MVP, hitting .393 and capping it by blasting an insurance-run homer in the bottom of the eighth of Game 7 against Ramiro Mendoza. The pivotal hit was a two-run, third-inning homer by Mark Koenig, who once said of his legacy: "Just putting on a Yankee uniform gave me a little confidence, I think. That club could carry you."

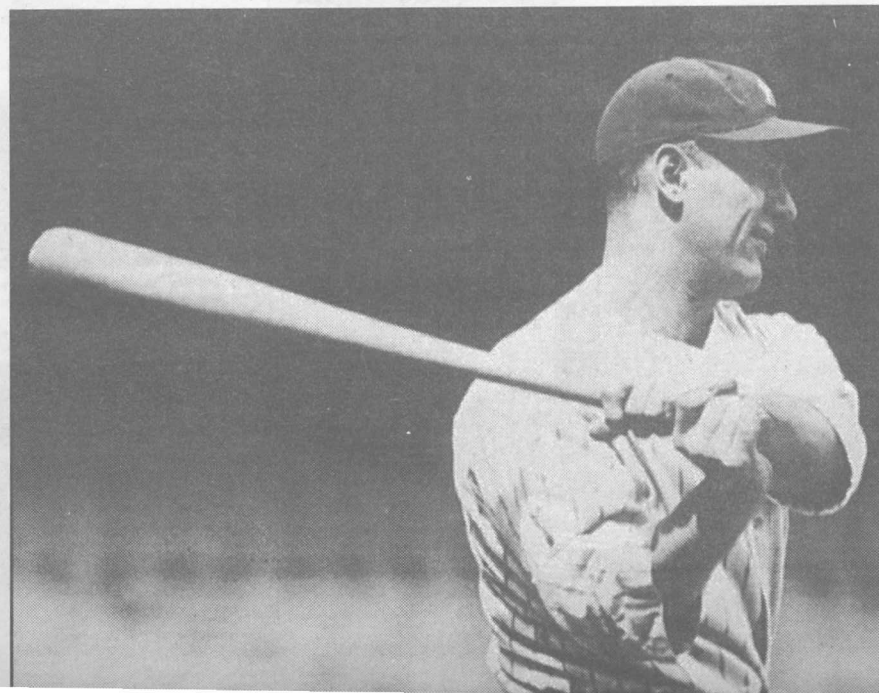
That club scored one more triumph when Tino Martinez, the potential tying run, lined out to Gehrig in the ninth.

Of course, there is no way a computer can gauge how Ruth's Yankees would have reacted to ballplayers from different races and cultures, to splitters and sinkers and sliders, to night games. Nor is there a way to simulate how today's Yankees would handle a spitball (Shocker was still throwing it legally in 1927 under a grandfather clause), or Ruth's intimidating presence or the drive home to New Jersey without the George Washington Bridge (opened in 1931).

But that's what made it so intriguing. A series triumph for the '27 team was

A Dream Come True

'27 Yanks vs. '98 Yanks in computer World Series



Game 1 at Old Yankee Stadium

'98 Yankees	021 000 000	0 — 3 7 0
'27 Yankees	000 100 020	1 — 4 11 1

Pettitte, Stanton (8), HERNANDEZ (9), Rivera (10)
vs. Hoyt, Shawkey (8), MOORE (10)
Home Runs: Williams, Ruth, Gehrig

Game 2 at Old Yankee Stadium

'98 Yankees	001 000 000	— 1 6 1
'27 Yankees	124 004 10x	— 12 17 2

CONE, Mendoza (4), Holmes vs. SHOCKER
Home Runs: Combs, Ruth (2), Lazzeri, Collins

Game 3 at Current Yankee Stadium

'27 Yankees	000 010 002	— 3 8 2
'98 Yankees	000 004 00x	— 4 6 1

PENNOCK, Shawkey (8) vs. WELLS, Rivera (9)

Game 4 at Current Yankee Stadium

'27 Yankees	000 001 101	— 3 6 1
'98 Yankees	020 004 01x	— 7 12 0

RUETHER, Pipgras (8) vs. Irabu, HERNANDEZ, Rivera
Home Runs: Gehrig, Paschal, Brosius, Posada 2

Game 5 at Current Yankee Stadium

'27 Yankees	200 100 000	— 3 6 2
'98 Yankees	040 022 00x	— 8 10 2

HOYT, Shawkey (6) vs. PETTITTE, Rivera (9)
Home Runs: Gehrig, Posada

Game 6 at Old Yankee Stadium

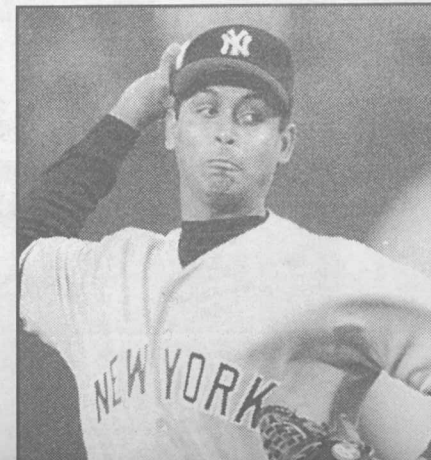
'98 Yankees	000 010 000	— 1 5 1
'27 Yankees	200 100 00x	— 3 5 0

CONE vs. SHOCKER
Home Runs: Collins

Game 7 at Old Yankee Stadium

'98 Yankees	000 100 200	— 3 8 0
'27 Yankees	202 000 01x	— 5 12 1

WELLS, Hernandez (4), Irabu (7), Stanton (7), Mendoza (8) vs. MOORE, Shawkey (8).
Home Runs: Koenig, Ruth, Gehrig



kees specifically for Newsday. "These Yankees win a lot of games 2-1 and 10-9, and that doesn't result in dominant numbers," Barkan said.

Strat-O-Matic uses numbers to generate most of its ratings, although staffers interview baseball people and comb old game stories to rate players defensively.

Computer experts from the company tested the disk with a 162-game season between the '98 Yankees and the '27 Yankees, and the '27 club won 98 games. Ruth hit more than 70 homers.

In Newsday's Dream Series, home games for the '27 club were played using the old Yankee Stadium dimensions, under daylight conditions, with no designated hitter. The '98 Yankee home games were "played" at the current Stadium, at night, with the DH. Both clubs were managed by a reporter doing his best to check his bias for late-20th-Century baseball.

Some highlights:

Joe Dugan won Game 1 with a two-out, bases-loaded, 10th-inning single off Mariano Rivera. In Game 2, Murderers' Row pounded David Cone for four home runs (two by Ruth) in the first three innings of a 12-1 landslide.

When it seemed appropriate to break up the Yankees! — a nod inspired by the 1927 team — the history buff allowed just six innings to win Game 3, 4-3.

Ramiro Mendoza delivers and Lou Gehrig sends the pitch into the seats in Game 7.



COMPOSITE BOXSCORE

1927 YANKEES

Batter	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	Avg.
Combs cf	7	30	7	8	1	1	.267
Koenig ss	7	29	2	6	1	2	.207
Ruth rf	7	27	7	7	4	6	.259
Gehrig 1b	7	28	7	11	4	9	.393
Meusel lf	7	27	4	9	0	1	.333
Lazzeri 2b	7	24	1	3	1	2	.125
Dugan 3b	7	28	2	10	0	3	.357
Collins c	6	20	2	7	2	4	.350
Grabowski dh,c	3	9	0	0	0	0	.000
Paschal dh, ph	4	8	1	2	1	1	.250
Totals	7	241	33	65	14	29	.270

Pitcher	G	W-L-Sv	IP	H	BB	SO	R	ER	HR	ERA
Pipgras	1	0-0-0	1.0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0.00
Shawkey	4	0-0-1	7.2	3	3	10	0	0	0	0.00
Shocker	2	2-0-0	18.0	11	3	9	2	1	0	0.50
Moore	2	2-0-0	8.0	7	3	4	3	2	0	2.25
Pennock	1	0-1-0	7.1	6	3	3	4	2	0	2.45
Hoyt	2	0-1-0	12.0	15	9	7	11	10	2	7.50
Ruether	1	0-1-0	7.0	12	1	1	7	6	3	7.71
Totals	7	4-3-1	61.0	54	22	35	27	21	5	3.10

1998 YANKEES

Batter	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	Avg.
Knoblauch 2b	7	28	2	6	0	2	.214
Jeter ss	7	31	2	6	0	2	.194
O'Neill rf	7	29	3	8	0	0	.276
Williams cf	7	29	6	8	1	4	.276
Martinez 1b	7	24	4	3	0	2	.125
Strawberry lf,dh	4	13	2	3	0	3	.231
Posada c	7	27	4	9	3	10	.333
Brosius 3b	7	23	2	8	1	4	.348
Raines dh,ph	4	7	0	1	0	0	.143
Curtis lf	6	12	1	2	0	0	.167
Bush ph	1	1	0	0	0	0	.000
Girardi ph	1	1	0	0	0	0	.000
Totals	7	234	27	54	5	26	.231

Pitcher	G	W-L-Sv	IP	H	BB	SO	R	ER	HR	ERA
Irabu	2	0-0-0	3.0	2	1	2	0	0	0	0.00
Pettitte	2	1-0-0	15.2	13	6	11	5	4	2	2.30
Rivera	4	0-0-1	3.0	3	3	0	1	1	0	3.00
Hernandez	3	1-1-0	10.1	10	2	8	4	4	2	3.48
Wells	2	1-1-0	11.0	12	1	6	6	5	2	4.09
Holmes	1	0-0-0	2.0	3	0	2	1	1	1	4.50
Cone	2	0-2-0	11.0	12	3	11	10	7	5	5.73
Mendoza	2	0-0-0	4.0	9	3	1	5	5	1	11.25
Stanton	2	0-0-0	0.2	1	0	0	1	1	1	18.50
Totals	7	3-4-1	60.2	65	19	41	33	28	14	4.15

After Hideki Irabu was injured covering first base in the third inning of Game 4, Orlando (El Duque) Hernandez pitched 6½ innings of solid emergency relief. Against ace Waite Hoyt the next night, Jorge Posada hit a grand slam to

give the modern Yankees an 8-3 win and a surprising 3-2 series lead.

But history always has been kind to the '27 Yankees, and so was the CD-ROM. Shocker beat Cone again in Game 6. Wilcy Moore, a surprise starter in

Game 4 of the 1927 World Series, won a surprise start in Game 7 this time. And there was nothing to contradict those words Ruth rasped on Lou Gehrig Day in 1939: "I say the 1927 team was the greatest the Yankees ever had . . ."