



## ***SABR 45 Rolls Into Chicago Palmer House Hilton June 24-28***

*By David J. Fletcher, CBM President  
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The **Society for American Baseball Research (SABR)** — the most prominent organization dedicated to fostering the research and history of baseball — is coming to Chicago this week.

Starting on Wednesday, the 45th SABR national conference will feature top speakers from around the baseball world — front office executives, players, managers, scouts, broadcasters, writers, and analysts — plus panel discussions on the Cubs, White Sox, the Negro Leagues, women in baseball, and baseball broadcasting.

The local Emil Rothe Chicagoland SABR Chapter hosts this year's national conference.

Once considered a fringe organization of nerdy white middle-age male baseball fans, SABR has become mainstream as its research and analysis of baseball have been adapted by MLB.

In 1977, SABR Member Bill James, coined the word “Sabermetrics” as “the search for objective knowledge about baseball” and he was eventually hired by the Boston Red Sox in 2002 as a special advisor. In Boston, James influenced current Cubs President Theo Epstein when he was with the Red Sox. Sabermetrics got further popularized by the 2011 film “Moneyball” starring Brad Pitt about Oakland A’s GM Billy Beane's use of evidence-based sabermetrics to assemble a competitive baseball team in a low revenue market based on Michael Lewis' 2003 book of the same name.

SABR was established in Cooperstown, New York, in August 1971 by sportswriter Bob Davids and others. It is now based in Phoenix after being headquartered in Cleveland for decades. SABR is now housed at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University and hosts a Baseball Analytics conference during the Cactus League season in March.



**The Society for American  
Baseball Research (SABR)  
National Conference, June  
24-28 in Chicago, IL.**

This will be SABR's fourth national convention in Chicago, and the first since SABR 16 in 1986. The third annual convention in 1973 featured broadcaster Bob Elson and Negro Leaguer Dave Malarcher as guest speakers. In 1976, SABR members gathered again in Chicago as former White Sox manager Lew Fonseca, the 1929 American League batting champion, served as the keynote speaker.

On Thursday morning — before the Cubs take on the Dodgers at Wrigley Field for an afternoon game — there will be a panel discussion on baseball broadcasting. The panel includes Chicago Cubs announcers Len Kasper, Jim Deshaies, and Ron Coomer. Curt Smith, who has written several books on baseball broadcasting, moderates the panel.

Former *Chicago Tribune* national baseball writer Phil Rogers—now with MLB Advanced media as a national columnist for MLB.com — will showcase a special tribute to Chicago baseball icons Ernie Banks and Minnie Minoso on Friday, June 26 at the SABR awards luncheon.

On Saturday afternoon, the SABR 45 Negro Leagues Panel is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. Saturday, June 27, 2015, at the Palmer House Hilton. The panelists include former Negro Leagues pitchers Al Spearman (Chicago American Giants and Kansas City Monarchs) and Ernie Westfield (Birmingham Barons and last starter in the East-West game at Comiskey Park in 1960). The panel is moderated by Larry Lester, who the nation's preeminent expert on the East-West Negro League All-Star game that ran from 1933 to 1960 at old Comiskey Park.

In advance of the conference in Chicago, SABR Two books published two new books, which the CBM contributed to:

- **Scandal on the South Side: The 1919 Chicago White Sox**
- **Winning on the North Side: The 1929 Chicago Cubs**

This author wrote the chapter on Buck Weaver for the 1919 White Sox book while George Castle and I wrote the chapters on William Wrigley, Jr, Midge Donahue, and William Louis Veeck, Senior for the 1929 Cubs Book.

**Conference registration:** You can register on-site at the Palmer House Hilton beginning Wednesday, June 24. [Click here for complete information on SABR 45 registration rates.](#) The regular registration rate is \$229 for SABR members or \$262 for non-members. Single-day rates (\$99) also will be available for purchase on-site during convention registration hours.