

CY SETS NL CAREER AND MLB RETIREMENT RECORDS

On Saturday afternoon, June 2, 1923, after his mammoth month of May, Cy went to the plate in the eighth inning against the NY Giants' Art Nehf. Nehf was a front-line pitcher. No matter. Cy stroked a home run, the 127th of his career.

A new NL record was set, as Cy surpassed Sam Thompson's record. Cy reached a rarity in the world of MLB records. As the 1920s rolled on Cy added to his record home run numbers. Rogers Hornsby would overtake Cy's #1 status on June 27, 1929 when he surpassed Cy's 251 career mark. Thus Cy held the NL record for six full seasons.

(Steve Heusslein of Calumet, MI, in a draft of an upcoming book, notes that Nehf was Cy's "old college adversary," as he attended Terre Haute Institute of Technology, an opponent on Notre Dame's schedule.)

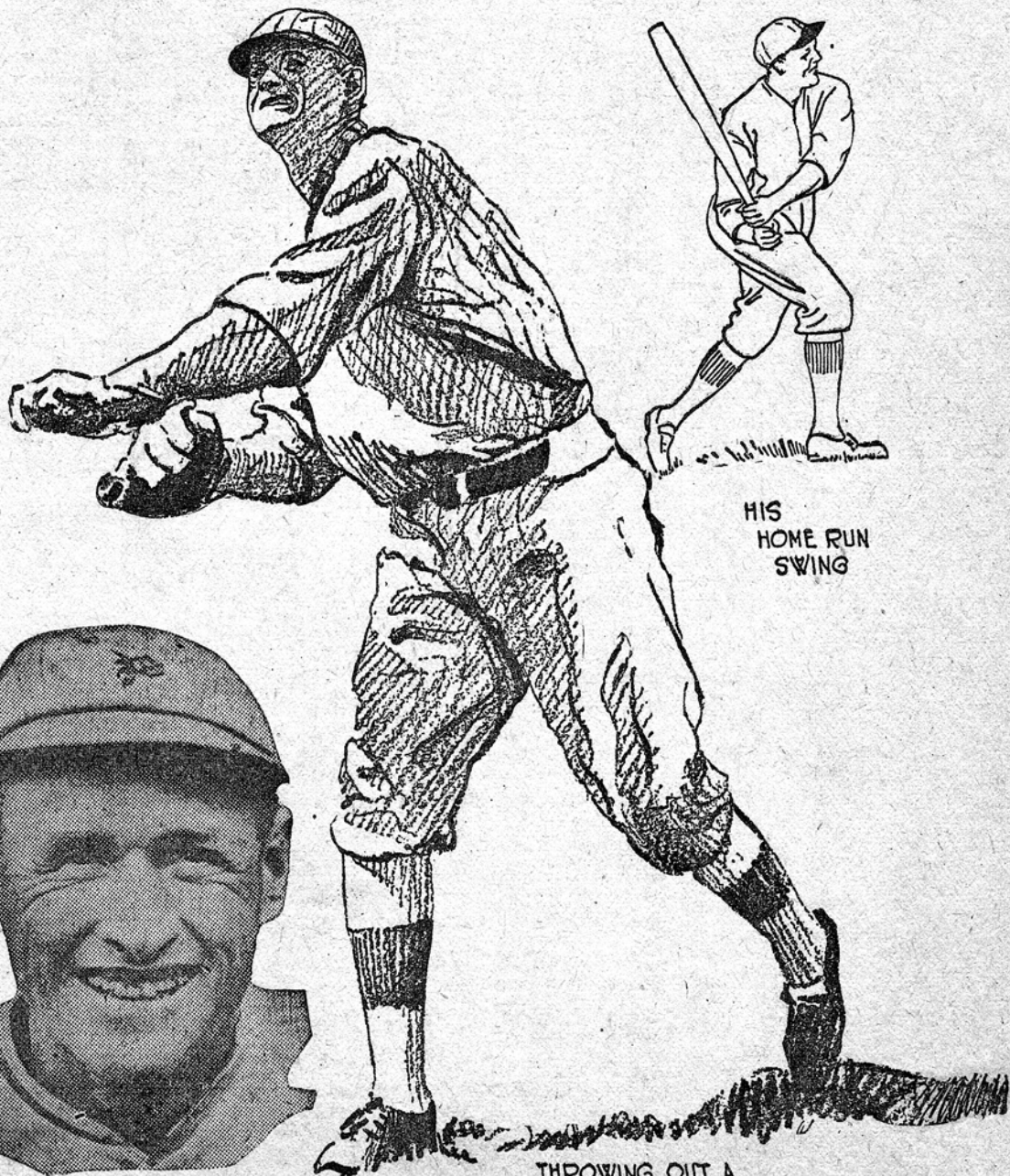
Cy hit his last home runs in 1929. When he retired at the end of 1930 he had amassed 251 home runs, a majority of which came in the live ball era, but a fair amount came in the eight years of his dead ball time. He set the MLB record for most home runs at retirement, a record which would stand until the younger Babe Ruth would retire six years later in 1935 with 714 home runs.

What about the NL record? The younger Hornsby retired in 1937 with the new record of 301 homers. Old Cy's NL record stood for seven seasons.

Bottom line? Cy set the pace. He set more records. He was unique.

Only Hornsby hit more home runs in the NL in the 1920s than did Cy, 249 to 202. Hornsby was younger, and while Cy was winding down in 1928 and 1929, Hornsby was still going strong. He exceeded Cy's final record of 251 career home runs, gained in 1929, the following season. However, Cy's career leadership held for seven seasons, 1923 - 1929.

CY WILLIAMS: SLUGGING FOR THE PHILLIES

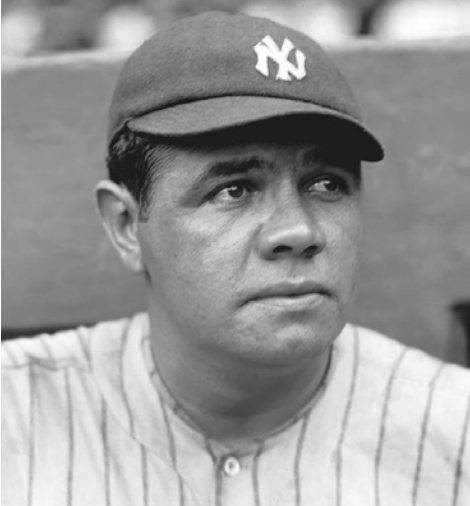


HIS HOME RUN SWING

A CLOSE-UP

THROWING OUT A BASE RUNNER

TOP FOUR OF TOP THREE



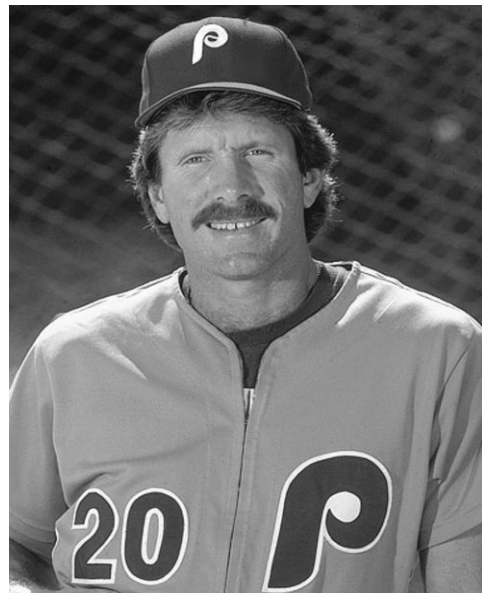
Babe Ruth, 16, AL



Mel Ott, 14, NL



Cy Williams, 11, NL



Mike Schmidt, 11, NL

These four continue to lead all baseball for seasons in which they placed in the top three for home runs against their peers in their league. This is a measurement of consistency over time.

TOP-3 ALL-TIME MLB RECORDS

A “WOW” FACTOR!

When measured against contemporaries, his peers, year-to-year, Cy’s phenomenal mark for years as a home run leader stands tall. His consistency reflects a rare talent at work. How rare? Consider this:

To be in the top 25 in any category of hitting shows solid performance, a point of pride for any player. To rank in the top 10 sets a player apart as a star. Top-3? Wow! However, a critical measure of the value of a player is consistency. How regularly are they in top performance over time... over how many seasons?

Now comes Cy. He slugged his way to the Top-3 in League home runs 11 seasons. Only Ruth with 16 times and Mel Ott with 14 times all-time exceed Cy’s mark. And who tied Cy’s mark for third place all-time? Mike Schmidt.

On the list below, you will find many of baseball’s biggest names. Cy’s name is way up there at number three. He is consistently *unique*.

When you look at the graph line of Cy’s annual home runs, it appears to flow up and down, as if he were not very consistent. Now look at the marks of the annual #1 home run hitters. They are up and down also. So what is the point? Yearly variations matter far less than peer-to-peer results. For eleven seasons Cy placed himself in the Top-3. **Of the nearly 20,000 MLB players at the time of this writing, Cy Williams comes in at number three in the Top-3, all-time MLB, for annual total homers.**

In 1924, Gavvy Cravath’s record of eight seasons in the Top-3 in home runs was broken by Cy’s ninth time in the ranks. He continued to break his own record two more times, appearing for his eleventh time in the Top-3 in 1927. Two years later Ruth would overtake Cy. Still, Cy’s NL record of #1 would hold for a total of 19 years. It was not until the 1943 season that Mel Ott reached his twelfth season Top-3 to overtake Cy.

There it is. Ruth, Ott, Williams and Schmidt. The top four of the Top-3.

The Most Times in the Top-3 of a Major League on a Single-season Home Run's Leader Board Since 1900

Player	Years Top-3 in League	League
Babe Ruth	16	AL
Mel Ott	14	NL
Cy Williams	11	NL
Mike Schmidt	11	NL
Lou Gehrig	10	AL
Ted Williams	10	AL
Harmon Killebrew	10	AL
Jimmie Foxx	9	AL
Hank Aaron	9	NL
Mickey Mantle	8	AL
Willie Mays	8	NL
Reggie Jackson	8	AL
Barry Bonds*	8	NL
Mark McGwire*	8	NL
Gavvy Cravath	8	NL
Ernie Banks	7	NL
Johnny Mize	7	NL
Ralph Kiner	7	NL
Frank Baker	7	AL
Rogers Hornsby	7	NL
Dave Kingman	7	NL
Frank Robinson	6	NL / AL
Hank Greenberg	6	AL
Sammy Sosa*	6	NL
Dale Murphy	6	NL
Ken Griffey Jr.	6	AL / NL
Alex Rodriguez*	6	AL
Albert Pujols	6	NL / AL

(* PED Era)

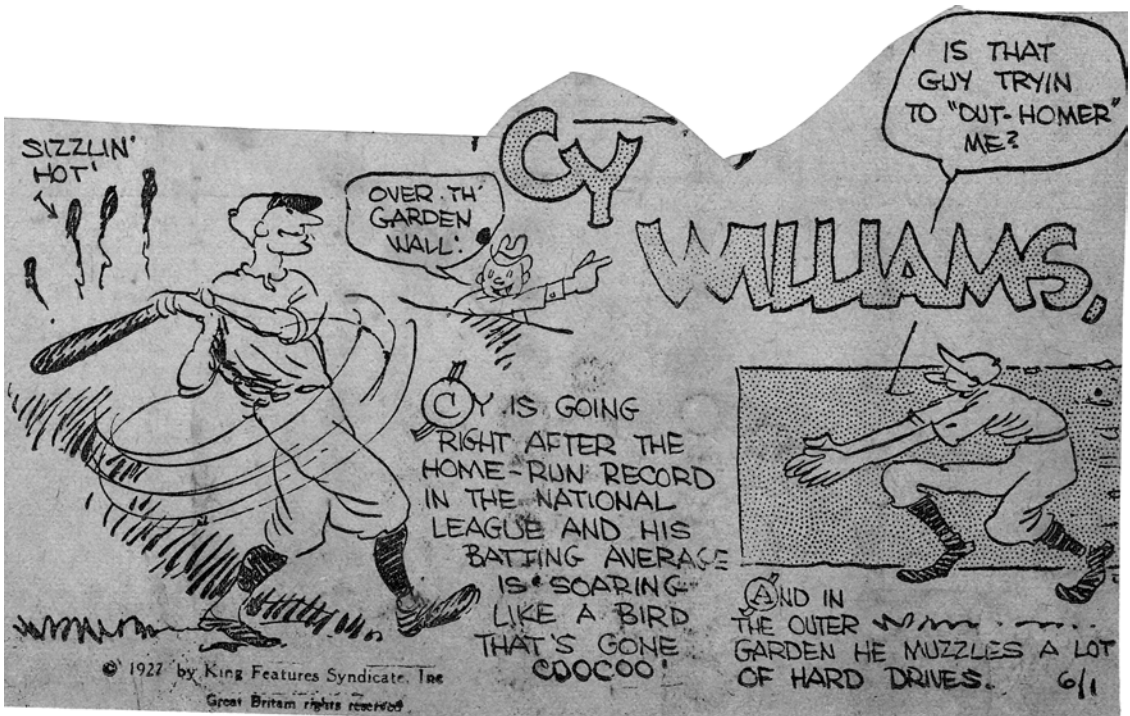
CY'S HR PERFORMANCE IN PERSPECTIVE

Wikipedia posted an interesting piece (author unknown), "List of Major League Baseball Progressive Career Home Run Leaders." The intro says, "The list helps contextualize the evolution of one of the most prized achievements in United States sports."

The list helps to place Cy in perspective with sluggers from both leagues over time. These are MLB stats, records for the modern era, 1900 to present. Note that only six players had both dead ball and live ball seasons, Cy being one. The limited number of years he played in the live-ball era is a factor in his total home runs compared to others.

Of the 28 players noted, Cy ranks 10th all-time in years on the continuing Top-10 career home run chart. Note that years in T-10 include those that continue after retirement. Current players will be listed in time.

Also note that "mil." means military service and "still" means record has not yet been surpassed.



CAREER TOTAL HOME RUNS REGISTERING YEARS IN TOP-10, ACTIVE AND BEYOND

Player	Years Dead Ball Era	Years Live Ball Era	Total Years	Years in T-10 Active
Cravath	10	1	11	9
Cy Williams	8	11	19	24
Ruth	6	15	21	101 (still)
Hornsby	5	18	23	30
Heilmann	5	12	17	6
Ken Williams	4	10	14	11
Wilson	0	12		11
Gehrig	0	17		42
Klein	0	17		17
Bottomley	0	16		5
Ott	0	22		35
Foxx	0	20		53
Ted Williams	0	19		33 (3 years mil.)
DiMaggio	0	13		13 (3 years mil.)
Simmons	0	20		23
Greenberg	0	17		18
Musial	0	19		12
Mays	0	22		43 (still)
Kiner	0	10		8 (prior mil.)
Snider	0	18		7
Mize	0	15		13 (3 years mil.)
Mathews	0	17		10
Killebrew	0	22		24
Aaron	0	23		42 (still)
Mantle	0	18		26
Banks	0	19		10
R. Jackson	0	21		13
Schmidt	0	18		8