

BASEBALL HISTORY

by

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Extra Base Hitters

On May 26, 1925, the prolific Ty Cobb bashed out his 1,000th extra base hit and in the process became the first major league player to do so. He was soon hotly pursued by his rival and future teammate, Tris Speaker. When the dust had cleared after the 1927 season, they were both tied with 1,104 extra base hits each. Cobb would eventually prevail in 1928, the final season for both future Hall of Famers when they were members of the powerful Philadelphia A's.

The following is a brief summary of other extra base hitters.



- Cap Anson (left) and Jim O'Rourke both reached 400 in 1886. Anson would later become the first to 500 and to 600, as well as to 700 and would reign as career leader from 1886 through 1895. O'Rourke wound up with 678 and is currently tied for 177th on the all-time list with Rocky Colavito and Kirby Puckett.
- Roger Connor (right), who had been steadily creeping up on Anson, finally caught and passed him in 1896 while being the first to surpass 800. Anson, however, regained the lead in 1897, the last year for both players. Connor (89th) closed out with 812 and Anson (84th) with 820, a mark that would stand through 1911.
- Honus Wagner was the first to 900 and almost the first to 1,000 falling just short at 993 (34th). His time at the top lasted from 1912 to 1924.



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- As described above, Cobb at 1,136 (11th) was on top after 1925, tied with Speaker (1,131 – 12th) after 1927 and then would be all alone on top through 1930.
- The Babe was first to both 1,200 and 1,300, finally raising the bar to 1,356 (4th). He was king of this category from 1931 – 1962.
- Stan Musial went into his final campaign of 1963 just 3 shy of Ruth and had enough left to smash 24 extra base hits in his last go-round. Musial (3rd) rests at 1,377, good enough to lead from 1963 to 1972.
- Musial gave way to the all-time leader, Hank Aaron, who cranked out 1,477 extra base hits. Aaron has held sway since 1973. He was, of course, a model of consistency, averaging 64.2 extra base hits per season over his 23-year career. Alex Rodriguez, the current generation's best chance to catch Aaron, is approximately 450 extra base hits away.

The following are some lists, factoids, and so on regarding extra base hits.

Top Ten Career		
1	Aaron	1,477
2	Bonds	1,440
3	Musial	1,377
4	Ruth	1,356
5	Mays	1,323
6	Palmeiro	1,192
7	Gehrig	1,190
8	F. Robinson	1,186
9	Griffey, Jr.	1,169
10	Yastremski	1,157

Top Ten Active		
1	Griffey, Jr.	1,169
2	M. Ramirez	1,067
3	A. Rodriguez	1,022
4	L. Gonzalez	1,028
5	Sheffield	994
6	Thome	981
7	Delgado	974
8	C. Jones	913
9	I. Rodriguez	883
10	Guerrero	845

In total there have been 31 players who have reached 1,000 extra base hits. Sheffield should make number 32 with Thome and Delgado to follow.

Surprisingly, 14 of the 27 players with 3,000+ hits did not muscle out 1,000 extra base hits. Falling into this category are Cap Anson, Honus Wagner, Paul Molitor, Nap Lajoie, Paul Waner, Robin Yount, Tony Gwynn, Rickey Henderson, Rod Carew, Wade Boggs, Al Kaline, Roberto Clemente, and Lou Brock.

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Mark McGwire, ranked 75th, has the lowest extra base hit total of players with 500 or more home runs. Sixty-nine percent of his 841 extra base hits were round trippers.

Single Season > 100 Extra Base Hits						
1	Ruth	119 (1921)		6	Sosa	103 (2001)
2	Gehrig	117 (1927)		12	Hornsby	102 (1922)
3	Bonds	107 (2001)		13	Foxx	100 (1932)
	C. Klein	107 (1930)			Gehrig	100 (1930)
5	T. Helton	105 (2001)			Gonzalez	100 (2001)
6	A. Belle	103 (1995)				
	Greenberg	103 (1937)				
	C. Klein	103 (1932)				
	T. Helton	103 (2000)				
	Musial	103 (1948)				

I was surprised that the year of offense – 1930 – produced only two 100 extra base hit seasons.

I was not surprised that the year 2001 had four (27% of the total) such seasons or that three of those men (Bonds, Sosa and Gonzalez) were the only ones on the list that were in their 30's at the time of their accomplishment.

Helton is the only slugger with 2 consecutive 100+ seasons. Gehrig and Klein also appear twice on the list.

Belle with 99 in 1998, Gonzalez with 99 in 1940 and Ruth with 99 in 1920 and 1923, barely missed multiple appearances.

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Top Ten with LA Ties		
1	M. Ott	1,071
2	R. Staub	838
3	A. Belle	791
4	L. Brock	776
5	W. Clark	771
6	R. Smith	734
7	J. Adcock	666
8	B. Dickey	617
9	A. Dark	556
10	V. Wells	484

Top Ten LA Active		
1	V. Wells	484
2	D. Delucci	276
3	B. Hawpe	245
4	A. Hill	174
5	R. Weeks	157
6	P. Bako	126
7	R. Theriot	98
8	M. Fontenot	67
9	M. Oweings	22
10	N. Stavinoha	7

As of June 21, 2009

Delucci, who was released earlier this year, is now in the minors. Stavinoha has been back and forth between the Cardinals at least twice in 2009.

Hawpe is currently having a career year regarding extra base hits and is tied with Miguel Tejada for the National League lead in doubles with 24. He is on pace to have approximately 290 total extra base hits by the season's end.

Owings may be better off as an every day player since 47% of his hits are of the extra base variety.

Lastly, let's take a look at the major league extra base hits results of some randomly chosen former Zephyrs and Pelicans.

Zephyrs	
Berkman	667
Abreu	776
Hidalgo	404
Loretta	402

1977 Pelicans	
B. Ayala	81
K. Oberkfell	310

Older Pelicans	
T. Tresh	366
R. Snyder	221
F. Thomas	579
T. Hoffman	0

Alright, so maybe Tex Hoffman wasn't randomly selected. Why then is he on the list?

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In 1925 while Cobb was blasting his way to 1,000 extra base hits, Hoffman was busy leading the Pelicans with 69 extra base hits of his own. At that time Hoffman, a native of San Antonio, was in his 13th minor league season and his last tour with the Pelicans. He was also the top extra base hit man for Larry Gilbert's squad in 1924 with 57.

His stay in the majors was brief. As a 21-year old second/third baseman he batted only 13 times for the Cleveland Indians in 1915. He managed to rap out only two singles.

However, he enjoyed a long (1913 – 1931, 1935) and successful minor league career totaling 830 extra base hits. He got to see quite a bit of America too as he played for twenty different cities in his twenty seasons.

Edward "Tex" Hoffman passed away on May 20, 1947 in New Orleans. He was 53 years old.