Baseball on Worldwide Covers

A Presentation for the Rochester Philatelic Association, 2019
by Luis Greiff, Jr.
The first US sport stamp, village baseball by BEP artist William Roach.
Pro baseball centennial and Jackie Robinson commemoratives.
Babe Ruth and Roberto Clemente commemoratives.
Lou Gehrig and Olympic baseball commemoratives.

The repetitive cries of a concessions vendor peddling freshly roasted peanuts and stadium hot dogs; the resounding crack as bat meets ball; the crowd’s deafening roar of approval as the batter sails one out of the ballpark and trots leisurely around the bases — these are the sights and sounds of America’s favorite spectator sport. Legend says Abner Doubleday invented baseball in 1839 in Cooperstown, New York. Baseball scholars mostly maintain that the 17th century English game of rounders is the true precursor to the sport, but Alexander J. Cartwright is largely credited with creating in 1845 a standardized version of the game, from which modern baseball evolved. After the Civil War, the game’s popularity skyrocketed. Amateur teams sprang up throughout the country, and in 1869 the Cincinnati Red Stockings became America’s first professional baseball team. By the early 1900s, America boasted two professional baseball leagues — the National and the American, and in 1905 the first World Series became an annual event. During the 20th century, baseball fever has become a world-wide epidemic, wildly popular in countries such as Japan, Venezuela and Puerto Rico. In 1992, baseball teams from across the globe traveled to Barcelona, Spain, to compete for the first time in the summer Olympic Games. In honor of this historic “first,” the U.S. Postal Service issued this Olympic Baseball postage stamp which depicts a player’s dramatic slide into home plate. Accompanied by artist Tom McNeely’s colorfull art-work, the stamp salutes America’s national pastime and its inclusion in the summer Olympic Games.
Softball issues, including the introduction of women's Olympic softball.

When softball was first devised in the late 19th century, its developer, W.W. Hancock of Chicago, envisioned it as an indoor alternative to baseball. To facilitate playing inside, the ball was made larger — 12 inches in circumference — and the bat thinner than those used in traditional baseball. In addition, the playing field was reduced in size. All of these changes were intended to limit the distance of a batted ball. Hancock perhaps little imagined that his creation would grow to rival the game it emulated, involving millions of players in the United States and around the world. Across America, leagues offer teams the opportunity to play slow-pitch and fast-pitch versions of the game. It has been said that no game is more American than baseball, but thanks to its diversity and popularity, softball can easily make a similar claim. Softball’s international popularity will be demonstrated this year at Atlanta when the game makes its debut as an Olympic event.
Casey at the Bat baseball poem written in 1888 by Ernest Thayer.

Mighty Casey – Baseball Hero

When the poem “Casey at the Bat” appeared in the San Francisco Examiner June 3, 1888, it was an instant hit and has remained so to this day. For baseball is America’s favorite pastime and Ernest Lawrence Thayer captured the emotions that grip fans from time to time.

The poem opens with the hometown team, the Mudville nine, down four to two in the bottom of the ninth with two outs. The 5,000 fans are numb with melancholy. If only Casey were the next batter up, they could hope. But alas, two batters are ahead of Casey in the line-up.

Amazingly, Flynn snags a single. Blake, following, viciously slams the ball, stripping it of its very leather. Delirious hope sweeps melancholy away because Blake is safe on second, Flynn is a-huggin’ third, and Casey is striding to the plate.

Casey lets the first pitch go – “Strike one!” He lets the second go and it’s “Strike two!” The crowd holds its collective breath. Casey clenches his teeth. He pounds his bat on the plate, and glares at the pitcher. The ball is hurled; Casey swings. He misses! The poem ends with the Mudville fans wrapped in total despair.

But “it ain’t over ‘til it’s over.” James Wilson gave Mudville its day of joy in the sequel “Casey’s Revenge.”
Celebrate the Century baseball issues.

The championship games of 1903 are considered baseball’s first World Series®. Boston of the American League beat Pittsburgh of the National League 5 games to 3 in a best-of-nine series.

HF cachet

Bonnie Fuson cachet, 7/10

Babe Ruth® hit 54 home runs in 1920. He went on to hit 59 homers in 1921, and 60 in 1927. Twice he hit 3 home runs in a single game of a World Series®. One of his nicknames was the Sultan of Swat.
Celebrate the Century baseball issues.

Jackie Robinson™ broke the Major League Baseball color barrier in 1947 when he joined the Brooklyn Dodgers. Voted Rookie of the Year that season, he earned the National League’s Most Valuable Player award in 1949.

CELEBRATE THE CENTURY – 1940s


CELEBRATE THE CENTURY – 1950s
Celebrate the Century baseball issues.
Minor league commemorative cancel and kids sports issues.
Baseball Legendary Playing Fields commemoratives set of 10.
Canada Post cachets

T O R O N T O B L U E J A Y S
2 5 t h S E A S O N

One of the most successful baseball franchises in history, the Toronto Blue Jays joined the American League 25 years ago, and played their first game at Exhibition Stadium in 1977. The Jays moved to more spacious quarters at SkyDome in 1989, and a year later became the first team in major league history to draw four million spectators in a single season.

In 1992, the Jays defeated the Atlanta Braves in six games to take home Canada’s first World Series trophy. One of the greatest moments in Canadian sport took place the following season in game six of the World Series final against the Philadelphia Phillies. In the bottom of the ninth inning, with the Jays down a run, Joe Carter stepped up to the plate and blasted a three-run homer to claim baseball’s greatest prize for the second year in a row.
J. 144 《中华人民共和国第六届运动会》纪念邮票

邮电部于1987年1月20日发行《中华人民共和国第六届运动会》纪念邮票一套四枚，面值为0.95元。

中华人民共和国第六届运动会于1987年1月20日在广东举行，这套邮票画面上的体育项目用连缀动作形式表现，四幅画面用一个由跑道组成的一个“6”字连接起来，表示六届全运会。

J. 144 6th National Games of the People’s Republic of China

Commemorative Stamps

The Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications of PRC issued, on Nov. 20, 1987, a set of four commemorative stamps entitled “6th National Games of the People’s Republic of China” with a total face value of RMB1.96.

The Games were opened on Nov. 20 in Guangdong Province. All four stamps were designed to show continuous movements of different sports events. Putting four stamps together, the numeral “6”, formed by trails, is identified to indicate the 6th National Games.
1993 Casey at the Bat animated Disney film set from The Gambia.
1993 Casey at the Bat souvenir sheet from The Gambia.
1993 Casey at the Bat souvenir sheet from The Gambia.
1986 Grenada Disney set issued for the Ameripex 1986 stamp expo.
Japanese issues- 50th high school championship, 33rd national athletic meet

Japan Stamp Publicity Assn. cachet

Z Silks cachet
Japan issues 50th Intercity championships, 50th Anniversary Pro Ball

The Japanese professional baseball championships, which mark the 50th anniversary of professional baseball in Japan, were held in Tokyo every summer since 1927, with the exception of 1943-5. Under the auspices of the Manshiichi Shimbun Company. This year being the 50th such championships, a commemorative postage stamp will be issued. This summer, 32 amateur teams will participate.

Date of Issue: July 23, 1979
Denomination: 50 yen
Design: A ball bearing the Kusamutsu (black lion) emblem and a player
Printing Process: Five-color photogravure (yellowish orange, gray, red, dim blue, black)
Size of Impression: 25 mm x 35.5 mm
Sheet Composition: 20 (4 x 5) stamps
Quantity Issued: 27,000,000 stamps
Designer: Minoru Hisano
Cover Publisher: Matsuya Co., Ltd.
Netherlands Antillies sports issue.
Nicaragua 1974 History of Baseball commemorative series.
Turks & Caicos Norman Rockwell issue, 1948 painting The Three Umpires
In November 1934, 14 major leaguers visited the Far East to play 23 exhibition games. Japan’s best player was Inokawa a catcher who hit .348. “Beibu Rusu,” Babe Ruth’s Japanese name, led the team with a .408 batting average and 13 home runs.
Canadian issue honoring the 1919 Vancouver Asahi Int. League Champs
For Further Information Online...


Smithsonian Exhibit- https://postalmuseum.si.edu/exhibits/upcoming/baseball/index.html

Ed Stephan's Baseball on Stamps- http://www.edstephan.org/webstuff/bbstamps/as.html


Baseball Stamps & Postmarks Blog- http://baseballstamp.blogspot.com/

Thanks for Watching