

A Schott From The Bleachers

First Series Home Run Hit in 1884

by

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Long before the American and National Leagues began to vie for post-season baseball honors, we find that World Series contests were played between the National League and the American Association. These two rivals played a total of eight series and the 59 ball games which went into the books offer interesting notes for the fans to compare with today's standards.

In the very first World Series game, played at Cincinnati on October 6, 1882, we find the following historical items:

- Abner Dalrymple was the first World Series batter, lead-off hitter for the Chicago Nationals that day.
- Cincinnati won the first game, 4 – 0, and Will White became the first winning pitcher in a World Series game. He is also the first to hurl a shutout.
- Cincinnati went to bat in the 6th inning with Warren Carpenter, Danny Stearns, and Charles Fulmer each singling in order. Fulmer's hit is memorable in that it produced the first World Series run which was scored by Carpenter.
- About 2,600 fans were present for the first contest played in one hour and forty minutes.

Christy Mathewson's fine exhibition of winning three shutouts in 1905 was almost performed 21 years earlier. In the 1884 set, Charles Radbourn (winner of 60 National League games for Providence that season) defeated the New York club three times in consecutive days.

On October 24, 1884, Jerry Denny, Providence third sacker, nicked pitcher Tim Keefe of the New York Mets for the first World Series home run.

The 1887 series was a traveling carnival for the fifteen games played between Charles Comiskey's St. Louis Browns of the American Association and the Detroit National League representative were staged in 10 cities: St. Louis, Detroit, Pittsburgh, Brooklyn, New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, Washington, and Chicago.

Detroit won the 1887 set, 10 games to 5, and in this series the Browns presented baseball's greatest hitter – James E. "Tip" O'Neill, who had a .492 batting average for the season (thanks to scoring rules that gave batters a base hit for a base on balls that year).

In the 1886 classic the same "Tip" O'Neill garnered two homers in the October 19th game, becoming the first player in World Series history to hit two homer runs in one contest.

Going back to the 1887 affair, we can pick up another oddity – two World Series games in one day: St. Louis defeated Detroit, 11 – 4, at Washington on the morning of October 21st, then the clubs moved to Baltimore for an afternoon game which was won by Detroit, 13 – 3.

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