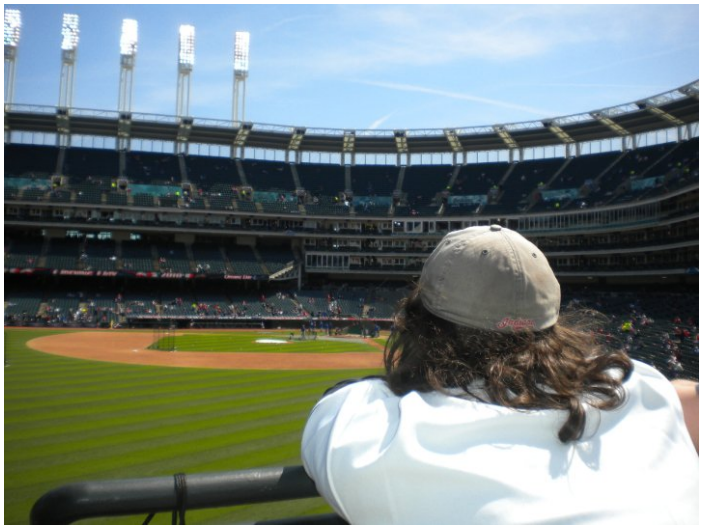
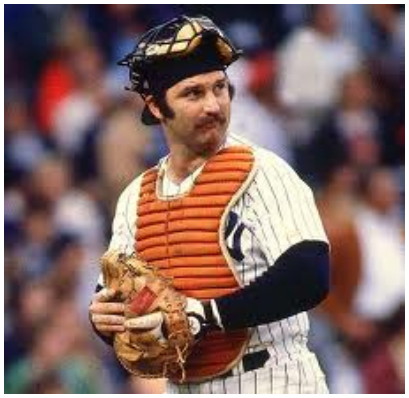


The state of Ohio has a very rich history. American history is dotted with native Ohioans, ranging from seven of our 44 Presidents to military generals to famous inventors to famous musicians. Ohio has produced over 1,000 baseball players in the history of the game, 1,004 to be exact. Beginning with Frank Barrows, Charlie Gould, and Scott Hastings in 1871 and going up through the present, Ohio has been well-represented by a lot of really good players, including 13 Hall of Famers.

With the Indians in a holding pattern this week, and likely for most of the rest of the offseason, it's a perfect opportunity to do a couple of articles I have wanted to do for a while. In the 210-year history of the state of Ohio, professional athletes have made impacts in the major sports. Obviously, Canton holds a special place in the sports world as the home of the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Both of Ohio's Major League teams, the Cleveland Indians and Cincinnati Reds, have extensive histories and a long line of outstanding players and accolades.

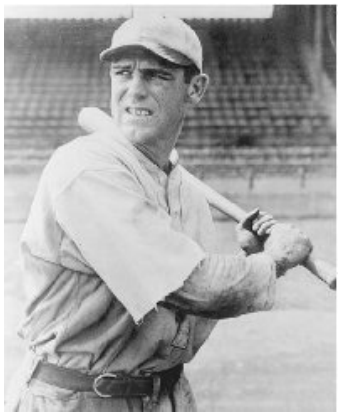
For the next two weeks in my View from the Porch, there will be a lot of Ohio pride on display, as I look at the all-Ohio 25-man roster, beginning with the starting lineup and bench players this week. Barring any Indians news, next week's View from the Porch will look at the 12-man pitching staff. With over 1,000 players spread over three different centuries, getting down to 13 position players and 12 pitchers will be no easy task.

Without further adieu, here is my starting lineup and bench players for the all-Ohio team.



Catcher: Thurman Munson – We'll never know if Thurman Munson would have made an appearance in Cooperstown because his life was cut short at age 32. Munson broke into the Major Leagues at 22 years old with the New York Yankees. The Akron native, who attended Kent State, was the 1970 Rookie of the Year, the 1976 Most Valuable Player, and a seven-time All-Star. In the storied history of the Yankees, Munson is the only player to have won both the Rookie of the Year and MVP award as a member of the Yankees.

Munson tragically died in a plane crash during the 1979 All-Star break. Over 11 seasons, Munson posted a .292/.346/.410/.756 slash line and threw out 44 percent of attempted base stealers.



First Base: George Sisler – In 1920, George Sisler, a Manchester native, set a record that took

84 years to break. Sisler batted .407 and had 257 hits. In 154 games for the St. Louis Browns, Sisler posted a 1.082 OPS that season. Even with that incredible performance, it took two years for Sisler to win the Most Valuable Player award, batting .420 in 1922. In his 15-year career, Sisler racked up 3,871 total bases and posted a .340/.379/.468/.897 slash line.

Sisler played from 1915-1930 with the St. Louis Browns, Washington Senators, and Boston Braves. The Baseball Writers Association of America voted Sisler into the Hall of Fame in 1939 with 85.8 percent of the vote.

Second Base: Ed Delahanty – This one might be a bit of a cop out, as Delahanty only played 131 of his 1,859 games at second base, but outfield is a little more crowded and it's impossible to leave Delahanty off of this team. On three separate occasions, Delahanty batted over .400. In 1895, Delahanty posted a .500 on-base percentage.

Over Delahanty's 16 seasons, he played for the Philadelphia Quakers, Cleveland Infants, Philadelphia Phillies, and Washington Senators. His career, which spanned from 1888-1903, saw him lead the league in batting average once, on-base percentage twice, slugging percentage five times, and on-base plus slugging five times. Delahanty's career .346 batting average ranks fifth all-time.

Delahanty's career came to an abrupt end in 1903. At age 35, Delahanty was in Niagara Falls when he was kicked off a train for being drunk and disorderly. Upon leaving the train, he fell off

of the International Bridge connecting Buffalo and Fort Erie, Ontario and was eventually swept over Niagara Falls. Whether Delahanty fell accidentally or committed suicide remains a mystery.

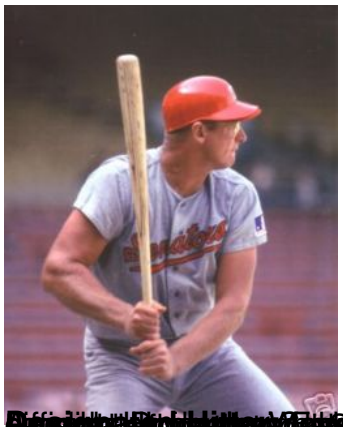
Delahanty was selected to the Hall of Fame by the Old Timers Committee in 1945.

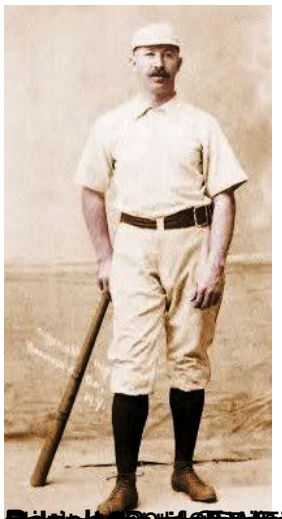
Shortshop: Barry Larkin – It's hard to go with anybody but Barry Larkin to be the shortstop. The Cincinnati native got to play with his hometown team for the duration of his illustrious 19-year career. Larkin was a 12-time All-Star, a nine-time Silver Slugger award winner, and a three-time Gold Glove award winner. He also won the Most Valuable Player award in 1995.

In the Reds' 1990 World Series sweep of the Oakland Athletics, Larkin batted .353 with a .950 OPS. For his career, Larkin posted a .295/.371/.444/.815 slash line and .975 fielding percentage ranks 39th all-time among shortstops. Larkin played in 2,180 games from 1986-2004 and still hit .289 in his final season at age 40. Over 9,057 plate appearances, Larkin walked 120 times more than he struck out. He also ranks 16th in career stolen base percentage at 83.11 percent.

Larkin was elected to the Hall of Fame in 2012, with 86.4 percent of the vote.

PIRATES
16





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