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Historic Base Ball

2017 Season | Greenfield Village®

► Historic Base Ball in Greenfield Village is presented through the generous support of Cynthia and Edsel B. Ford II.

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Base Ball: America's Pastime

This afternoon, travel back to a time when a game known as “base ball” — it was spelled as two words into the early 1900s — was sweeping the nation and fast becoming the national pastime. Greenfield Village's two clubs, the Lah-De-Dahs and the National Base Ball Club, as well as visiting clubs, take the field each weekend in Walnut Grove in a spirited match played by the rules of 1867 for gentlemanly recreation and exercise.



Greenfield Village Lah-De-Dahs

The Greenfield Village Lah-De-Dahs are based on a club that played in Waterford, Michigan. The existence of the Lah-De-Dahs was discovered during research for the J.R. Jones General Store, originally from Waterford, which now stands near the Village Green. When the Lah-De-Dahs compete against the National Base Ball Club of Greenfield Village or other clubs from around the country, they can be seen wearing uniforms from the time period when the original team played, when many players took the field wearing neckties.



National Base Ball Club of Greenfield Village

The National Base Ball Club of Greenfield Village is based on a club from Parma, Michigan, that competed in one of the earliest base ball tournaments, the World's Base Ball Tournament, played in Detroit in 1867. While the original Nationals lost in the tournament by a score of 61-34, the National Base Ball Club of Greenfield Village makes an effort each weekend not to repeat the performance of its historical namesake. When the Nationals take the field against their archrivals, the Greenfield Village Lah-De-Dahs, or other clubs from around the nation, they wear uniforms representing the late 1860s, including the shield-front shirts common at the time.

Rules of the Game

The **Greenfield Village Lah-De-Dahs** and the **National Base Ball Club of Greenfield Village** play their games by the rules of 1867 as set down in Henry Chadwick's *Haney's Base Ball Book of Reference*.

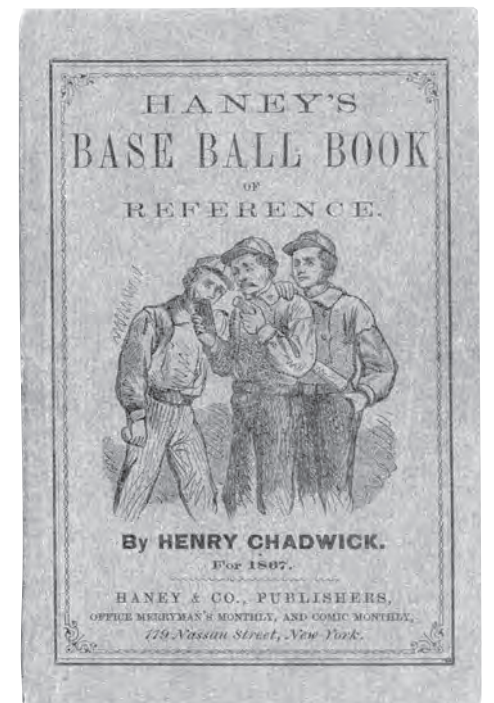
Base ball was changing rapidly through its early history. As it evolved from a simple children's game with few rigorous rules into a gentlemen's pastime, more stringent rules and a governing organization to maintain and communicate them were necessary. In the 1860s, the guides by Henry Chadwick, a member of the National Association of Base Ball Players Rules Committee and the game's first great journalist, provided that.

Available in the village store and online.

Member price: \$11.65

Nonmember price: \$12.95

(Price is subject to change.)



Haney's Base Ball Book of Reference-1867
Original copy from the collections of The Henry Ford.

Highlights of the Rules of 1867

The First Pitch

In 1867, the job of the pitcher was to put the batsman out, within the confines of the rule requiring the ball to be pitched “fairly for the striker,” close to the center of home base. However, pitchers tried changing the speed and angle of their pitches to lessen the effectiveness of the striker. Pitchers delivered the ball underhand with a straight arm, for “the ball must be pitched, not jerked or thrown,” to the striker.

The Batsman Position

The striker was obliged, upon taking his position at the plate, to place one foot upon the line of the base and keep it there until he had struck the ball. He was to stand on this line at least 12 inches from the plate so as to allow the pitcher a chance to pitch over the plate. He would be considered the striker until he had hit a fair ball, struck out or been put out on a foul ball caught on the fly, or “the bound.”

Strike Three!

From base ball's earliest written rules, if the striker swung at a pitch and missed, it was a “strike.” Three strikes meant an out. Since 1858, a rule also allowed called strikes. If the striker did not swing at hittable pitches for the apparent purpose of delaying the game for any cause, the umpire would give him a warning. After the warning, the umpire would begin to call strikes. Unlike today, a foul ball was never a strike.

Ball Three!

In 1864, a new rule was introduced. Just as he might warn the striker and call strikes if fair pitches were not swung at, now the umpire, after a warning to the pitcher, could also call balls. After the warning to the pitcher, “ball to the bat,” three more unfair pitches were ruled a “base on balls,” or what we now call a walk.

continued next page

► Though a game played by 1867 rules would still be identifiable to modern spectators as base ball, there are several important differences from the modern game.

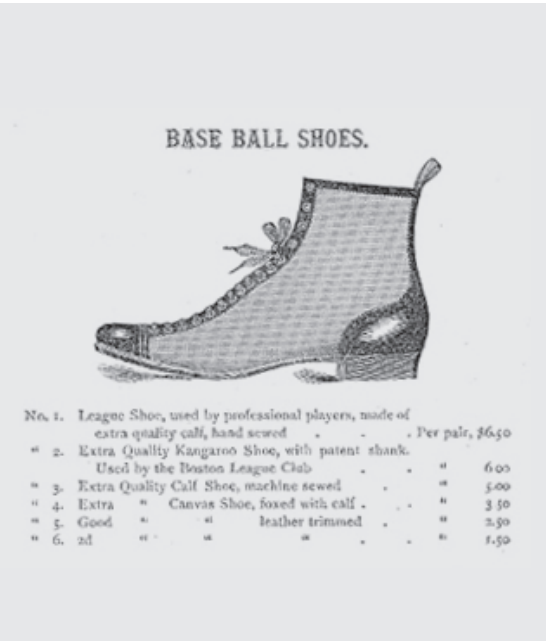
Highlights of the Rules of 1867 continued

Fair-Foul

Unlike modern rules, if a struck ball landed anywhere in fair territory and then rolled foul, even if it rolled into foul territory between home base and first base, the ball was fair. In the near future, professional-era players would take advantage of this rule and purposely hit the ball so it bounced just inside one of the base lines and then went immediately deep into foul territory.

On the Fly

Early base ball rules stated that a ball caught on the fly or on the first bounce put the striker out. As base ball changed from a children’s game to one played by gentlemen, catching a ball on the first bounce came to be viewed as childish. Chadwick called the one-bound catch “a feat a boy ten years of age would scarcely be proud of.” So in 1865, the rule was changed, and fair balls had to be caught on the fly to put the batsman out. Foul balls, however, could still be caught on the fly or on one bound to count as an out.



Base ball shoes, c. 19th century.
From the collections of The Henry Ford.

► For more information and sources regarding historic base ball, please visit these sites:
Vintage Base Ball Association vbba.org
Greenfield Village Base Ball thehenryford.org/historicbaseball



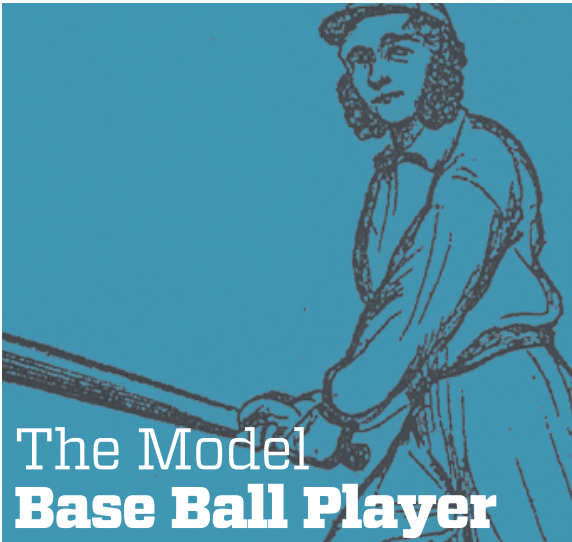
Reproduction base ball gloves and ball, c. 1867.

The Ball

“The ball must weigh not less than five and one-half, nor more than five and three-fourths, ounces avoirdupois. It must measure not less than nine and one-half, nor more than nine and three-fourths, inches in circumference. It must be composed of India rubber and yarn, and covered with leather, and, in all match games, shall be furnished by the challenging club and becomes the property of the winning club as a trophy of victory.” *Section I of the Rules of 1867 from Haney’s Base Ball Book of Reference-1867*

Slapping Leather

In the early days of base ball, fielders were almost exclusively bare-handed. Although there frequently was pain to hands and injuries to fingers, gloves were seen as unnecessary. However, during the World Tournament of 1867, the *Detroit Free Press* reported that some of the players were seen with “buckskin on their hands.” The report further states it was a practice that “we think can not be too highly condemned,” as the fingerless palm gloves were worn on both hands, and that interfered with throwing. The multiple games of the World Tournament may have been a factor in gloves being used by the catcher or first baseman. Although use by these two positions had become somewhat common by 1870, gloves of any sort at most positions remained infrequent through the remainder of the decade.



This is an individual not often seen on a ball ground, but he nevertheless exists; and as a description of his characteristics will prove advantageous, we give a pen photograph of him, in the hope that his example will be followed on all occasions, for if it were, an end would at once be put to many actions which now give rise to unpleasantness on our ball grounds.

His Moral Attributes

The principal rule of action of our model base ball player is to comport himself like a gentleman on all occasions, but especially on match days, and in so doing he abstains from profanity and its twin and vile brother, obscenity. ... He never censures errors of play made by a brother member or an opponent, as he is well aware that faultfinding not only leads to no improvement in the play of the one who blunders, but on the contrary is calculated to have the very reverse effect.

The Position of Umpire

The Qualifications of an Umpire.
It is almost unnecessary to remark that the first duty of an umpire is to enforce the rules of the game with the strictest impartiality. ... It requires a man of considerable moral courage to act impartially in the position; and decision of character, coolness of judgment and quickness in observation are also necessary qualifications. ...

Keep cool; watch the ball all the time, and decide by the first impression of the play, and you cannot go far wrong.

From Haney’s Base Ball Book of Reference-1867

Technical Terms in Base Ball

From Haney’s Base Ball Book of Reference-1867

A Liner — A ball sent swift and straight from the bat without rising in the air or one thrown similarly to a base.

A Hot One — A very swiftly thrown or batted ball.

A Muffed Ball — A ball which the fielder touches but fails to hold or stop.

A Grounder — A ball hit along the ground, either on a line or on a series of bounds. (A telling hit at times as it invariably secures a base.)

A Daisy Cutter — A line ball sent close to the ground and cutting through the grass.

Dropping the Pace — Sending in a slow ball suddenly after having pitched swiftly for some time.

Facing for Direction — Standing at the home base with the bat and facing the fielder towards whose position in the field you desire to send the ball.

Forced From a Base — You are forced to leave a base either when all are occupied, and you stand on any one of the bases when the striker hits a fair ball, or when you are on the first base and a fair ball is struck.

Fungoes — A preliminary practice game in which one player takes the bat and, tossing the ball up, hits it as it falls, and if the ball is caught in the field, on the fly, the player catching it takes the bat. It is useless in batting practice, but good for taking fly balls.

Popping One Up — Hitting a ball up in the air over the head of the pitcher or in-fielders so that it can be readily caught by any of them.

The In-Field — That portion of the field within the base lines. The in-fielders include the first six players of nine, beginning with the catcher and ending with the shortstop.

Run Out — A player is “run out” when he is caught between two bases and is put out by one or other of the fielders.

Passed Ball — A passed ball is one muffed by the catcher on which a base is run.

An Over-Pitch — A passed ball pitched over the catcher on which bases are made.

A Wild Throw — A ball thrown over the head of a baseman or the catcher on which bases are made.

2017 Historic Base Ball Schedule

Saturday, June 10	HOME	1:30 p.m.	Lah-De-Dahs vs. Canal Fulton Mules Base Ball Club
Sunday, June 11	HOME	1:30 p.m.	Lah-De-Dahs vs. Royal Oak Wahoos Base Ball Club
Saturday, June 17	HOME	1:30 p.m.	Lah-De-Dahs vs. Fallasburg Flats Base Ball Club
Sunday, June 18	HOME	1:30 p.m.	Lah-De-Dahs vs. Saginaw Old Golds Base Ball Club
Saturday, June 24	HOME*	1:30 p.m.	Lah-De-Dahs vs. Wyandotte Stars Base Ball Club
Sunday, June 25	HOME*	1:30 p.m.	Lah-De-Dahs vs. Monitor Base Ball Club of Chelsea
Saturday, July 1	HOME*	1:30 p.m.	Lah-De-Dahs vs. Nationals Base Ball Club of Greenfield Village
Sunday, July 2	HOME*	1:30 p.m.	Lah-De-Dahs vs. Nationals Base Ball Club of Greenfield Village
Saturday, July 8	HOME	1:30 p.m.	Lah-De-Dahs vs. Nationals Base Ball Club of Greenfield Village
Sunday, July 9	HOME	1:30 p.m.	Lah-De-Dahs vs. Bay City Independents Base Ball Club
Saturday, July 15	HOME	1:30 p.m.	Lah-De-Dahs vs. Early Risers Base Ball Club of Detroit
Sunday, July 16	HOME	1:30 p.m.	Lah-De-Dahs vs. Rochester Grangers Vintage Base Ball Club
Saturday, July 22	HOME	1:30 p.m.	Lah-De-Dahs vs. Nationals Base Ball Club of Greenfield Village
Sunday, July 23	HOME	1:30 p.m.	Lah-De-Dahs vs. Nationals Base Ball Club of Greenfield Village
Saturday, July 29	HOME	1:30 p.m.	Lah-De-Dahs vs. Flint Lumber City Base Ball Club
Sunday, July 30	HOME	1:30 p.m.	Lah-De-Dahs vs. Regular Base Ball Club of Mt. Clemens
Saturday, August 5	HOME	1:30 p.m.	Lah-De-Dahs vs. Union Base Ball Club of Dexter
Sunday, August 6	HOME	1:30 p.m.	Lah-De-Dahs vs. Walker Tavern Wheels Base Ball Club
Saturday, August 12 Sunday, August 13	HOME	VARIED	World Tournament of Historic Base Ball®
Saturday, August 19	HOME	1:30 p.m.	Lah-De-Dahs vs. Northville Eclipse Base Ball Club
Sunday, August 20	HOME	1:30 p.m.	La De Dahs vs. Regular Base Ball Club of Mt. Clemens
Saturday, August 26	AWAY	TBA	Lah-De-Dahs at Wyandotte Stars - Memorial Field, Wyandotte, MI
Sunday, August 27	AWAY	TBA	Lah-De-Dahs at Early Risers - Detroit, MI
Sunday, September 17	AWAY	TBA	Lah-De-Dahs at Northville Eclipse ~ Northville, MI
Saturday, September 23	AWAY	VARIED	Lah-De-Dahs at Michigan State Tournament - Bay City, MI
Sunday, September 24	AWAY	TBA	Lah-De-Dahs at Regulars of Mt. Clemens - Mt. Clemens , MI

► Live music provided by the Dodworth Saxhorn Band on select dates. Home games will be held on Walnut Grove in Greenfield Village. Home game time is 1:30 p.m. *Games may be played at Hawthorn Glade Field. Schedule and programming subject to change.

Visit thehenryford.org/historicbaseball for updated game and schedule information.

INNINGS.										
Fielders	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Team
1. 1st B.										
2. 3d B.										
3. C.										
4. 2d. B.										
5. P.										
6. C.F.										
7. L.F.										
8. R.F.										
9. S.S.										
Total.										
Grand Total.										

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9. S.S.										
Total.										
Grand Total.										

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thehenryford.org/worldtournament

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This exhibition was developed by the Museum of Science, Boston in collaboration with
Pixar Animation Studios. Image © Disney / Pixar

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