

Pace of Games

In light of baseball's continuing attempts to quicken the pace of games, I've done an analysis of every major-league game I've attended (not counting exhibition but including All-Star and post-season games) since that summer day in 1962 when my folks took me to see Jim Kaat shut down Cleveland on three hits, Bob Allison hit two home runs, and Vic Power steal home in a game played in a snappy 1 hour, 57 minutes.

Using times of games in this analysis isn't really valid since a 12-inning game will take longer than a nine-inning game and a 10-8 slugfest ought to consume more time than a 2-1 game. More relevant is the time of the game per the number of batters who come to the plate.

The table at the right shows that in the 643 games I've attended, there have been 49,353 batters (76.8 per games) totaling 103,882 minutes with an average time per batter of 2 minutes, 6 seconds. A breakdown by decade clearly indicates a slowing of the pace over the years. (I also divided 1981-90 into separate segments since there seemed to be a considerable slowing of pace starting in 1986).

I have pitch totals for games that I've scored since 1971 (when I started keeping pitch counts in my scorebook) and used these to try and isolate the reasons for the slowing pace (see table below). It's still hard to tell whether the slower pace is a result of more pitches per game or more time between pitches.

Readers are invited to draw their own conclusions from all this.

Games with Pitch Counts:

	<u>Games</u>	<u>Batters</u>	<u>Minutes</u>	<u>Time/ Batter</u>	<u>Pitches/ Batter</u>	<u>Time/ Pitch</u>
1971-80	90	6,983	13,820	1:59	23,820	35 sec.
<i>Avg./Game</i>		77.6	2:34		265	
1981-85	20	1,527	3,089	2:01	5,327	:35
<i>Avg./Game</i>		76.3	2:34		266	
1986-90	23	1,782	3,995	2:15	6,261	:38
<i>Avg./Game</i>		77.5	2:54		272	
1991-95	117	9,015	20,067	2:14	32,607	:37
<i>Avg./Game</i>		77.1	2:52		274	
Total	250	19,307	40,971	2:07	68,015	:36
<i>Avg./Game</i>		77.2	2:44		272	

Cow Chips

News about Chapter Members and Their ilk

Jim Wyman was interviewed by phone on WJR Radio in Detroit on the subject of 19th-century baseball. . . . **Emily Leachman** has been accepted at Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio (alma mater of **Paul Newman**). **Jimmy Leachman** is running freshman track. **Nancy Jo Leachman** spent time productively on the Internet, correctly answering the riddle of the day and winning a 40-ounce can of North Carolina Goobers. . . . **Paul Rittenhouse** continues to hold the lead in his Fantasy Death League but **Howard Luloff**, who scored big by predicting the demise of **McLean Stevenson**, is closing in on first place. . . . **Alan Holst** is transferring to the State Department but doesn't know if he'll end up in the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Mexico, Honduras, India, Bangladesh, the Philippines, London, or back in Columbia. He and his family recently visited Lake Titicaca, the highest navigable lake in the world. **Sakura Holst** is taking ballet lessons and preparing to start kindergarten in the fall.

	<u>Games</u>	<u>Batters</u>	<u>Minutes</u>	<u>Time/ Batter</u>
1962-70	48	3,555	7,403	2m,5s
<i>Avg./Game</i>		74.1	2h, 34m	
1971-80	218	16,922	34,092	2:01
<i>Avg./Game</i>		77.6	2:36	
1981-85	134	10,117	20,567	2:02
<i>Avg./Game</i>		75.5	2:33	
1986-90	101	7,854	17,520	2:14
<i>Avg./Game</i>		77.8	2:53	
1991-95	142	10,905	24,300	2:14
<i>Avg./Game</i>		76.8	2:51	
Total	643	49,353	103,882	2:06
<i>Avg./Game</i>		76.8	2:42	