**BASEBALL MASCOTS Monday September 11, 2017**

**SEGWAY** – today we’re going to talk about Mascots in baseball – here we have a picture of a fictional mascot from the moves – Bobby Savoy – along with Roy Hobbs – in the baseball movie “The Natural.” We’re going to come back to them later …

**Slide 2** – like Bobby Savoy, most early-day mascots were boys – often homeless or orphans – who also served as batboys for the team. They were usually considered to be “good luck” for their team. Here’s a picture of one of the very earliest, “Little Nick”, who was the team mascot for the 1880s St. Louis Brown Stockings of the American Association.

**Slide 3** – another well-known mascot from the early 1900s was a black orphan who was adopted by Detroit Tigers’ star Ty Cobb. The boy, whose real name was Ulysses Harrison, was called “Lucky Rastus” by Cobb’s Tigers teammates. The boy traveled with the team and often Cobb had to sneak the boy into one of the team’s rooms to avoid segregation laws at the hotels.

**Slide 4** – also in the early 1900s, a physically-disabled or deformed person might also serve as a mascot. Hunchbacks were especially popular as mascots, as they were thought to be able to foresee the future. This is how we got the phrase, “I’ve got a hunch about that.” Louis Van Zelst was hired by Connie Mack as the Philadelphia Athletics batboy in 1910. He was the A’s mascot for five seasons, during which the team won four pennants and three World Series. Here’s a picture of Van Zelst and the A’s coming onto the field for Game One of the 1911 World Series.

**Slide 5** – Animals are popular mascots, but that trend started in the early days of college football. Yale University had one of the very first mascots … named …

**Slide 6** – Handsome Dan ! Today the Yale teams are still called the Bulldogs, and the current mascot is **Handsome Dan the 18th**. He even has a hot dog named after him at Shake Shack.

**Slide 7** – The baseball mascot we would recognize today, what I’ll call the “Celebrity Mascot”, got its start in 1964 when the New York Mets moved into their new ballpark, Shea Stadium. That was the debut of **Mr. Met**. This type of baseball mascot has become so popular that today there are only three teams without mascots -- the Yankees, Dodgers, and Angels.

**Slide 8** – We don’t read much about Mr. Met here in Texas, but he got some bad press recently …

**Slide 9** – Probably the most famous of the Celebrity Mascots is the **San Diego Chicken**. <<read slide>> ?? Has anyone seen The Chicken at a ball game? He’s pictured here with baseball’s most famous elbow – Tommy John. Let’s watch one of his routines …

**Slide 10** – The Chicken hasn’t been affiliated with the San Diego Padres for some time, so today most polls of fans show that the **Phillie Phanatic** is now baseball’s most recognizable mascot. The Phanatic was one of the first to use an ATV to ride around the ballpark. The Phanatic and his scooter often got cross-ways with opposing managers, as we’ll see in this clip …

**Slide 11** – Here’s some Houston mascots <<read the slide>> Anyone seen these guys at games?

**Slide 12** – Here’s one for Kay … the Reds mascot <<read slide>>

**Slide 13** – We’ve all seen this mascot out at Dell Diamond … Spike <<read slide>>

**Slide 14** – Here’s a mascot I’ve met from Mexico – Chacho the Tiger. <<read slide>>

**SEGWAY** – I want to get back to those animal mascots in football. Bobby and Renee … who’s the Aggies’ mascot ??

**Slide 15** – That’s right, it’s **Reveille.** Isn’t that one good-looking pooch? Do you know how she got her name? One day in 1931 some Aggies were returning to College Station and saw a dog on the side of the road that appeared to be injured. They took the dog back to campus with them, planning to nurse it back to health. As it was against dorm rules to have a pet, they snuck the dog into their room. Everything went OK until the next morning, when reveille was sounded and the dog started barking.

The current mascot is Reveille 9th. This is a picture of Reveille the 8th, who is now retired.

**SEGWAY** – John – what does this mean? Make the hook-em gesture. And whose horns are they?

**Slide 16** – **Bevo** !! <<read slide>> Bevo always seems well-behaved on the sidelines, but this wasn’t always the case:

Bevo II once charged an [SMU](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern_Methodist_University) [cheerleader](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cheerleader), who had to defend himself with his megaphone.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bevo_%28mascot%29)

Bevo III escaped from his enclosure and ran amok across campus for 2 days.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bevo_%28mascot%29)

Bevo IV once attacked a parked car

Bevo V broke loose in Waco and scattered the [Baylor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baylor_University) band.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bevo_%28mascot%29)

**Slide 17** – Even though Aggies and Longhorns don’t always get along, their mascots are friendly.

**Slide 18** - Dave, how about the Texas Tech mascots? <<read slide>>

**Slide 19** – Back to mascots in the movies. Bobby Savoy was the mascot and batboy of the fictional New York Knights in the movie “The Natural”. Robert Redford played aging rookie Roy Hobbs. The scene we’re going to watch has to do with bats. When he was a child, Roy Hobbs made a bat from a tree struck by lightning on his Dad’s farm. ?? Anyone remember the name of his bat?? Hobbs used the bat all his life. Earlier in the season, Bobby and Hobbs made bat together that Bobby kept. Now the Knights are playing in the final game of the season … the winner goes to the World series. Let’s watch what happens …

**Slide 20** – after first video (Hit the Bull) …

Before the second video (Bring the Heat) … get Fred and/or Bob to help demonstrate. When the catcher wants you to throw a curve-ball, how many fingers does he put down?

**Slide 21** – Would you believe there’s a mascot hall of fame? Well there is – or will be next year <<read slide>> **Slide 22** – so, the next time you’re at the ballpark – have some fun with the mascot!