

# A Permanent National Institution

THE GROWTH OF NEW YORK RULES  
BASE BALL 1845 -1864

N.Y. Evening Express, Apr. 15, 1859

**THE GAME OF BASE BALL has long been a favorite and popular recreation in this country, but it is only within the last fifteen years that any attempt has been made to systematize and regulate the game, and to form Clubs with the purpose of playing under written rules, at stated periods during the season for out-door sports...the Knickerbockers were the pioneering organization.**

# Alexander Cartwright



# William Wheaton



# Daniel (Doc) Adams



# Knickerbockers?



## Knickerbocker Playing Rules, 1845

4th. The bases shall be from “home” to second base, forty-two paces; from first to third base, forty-two paces, equidistant.

8<sup>th</sup>. The game to consist of twenty-one counts, or aces; but at the conclusion an equal number of hands must be played.

## Knickerbocker Playing Rules (cont.)

- 9<sup>th</sup>. The ball must be pitched, and not thrown, for the bat.
- 10<sup>th</sup>. A ball knocked out of the field, or outside the range of the first or third base, is foul.



## Playing Rules (cont.)

- 11<sup>th</sup>. Three balls being struck at and missed and the last one caught, is a hand out; if not caught is considered fair, and the striker bound to run.
- 12<sup>th</sup>. If a ball be struck, or tipped, and caught, either flying or on the first bound, it is a hand out.

## Playing Rules (cont.)

- 13<sup>th</sup>. A player running the bases shall be out, if the ball is in the hands of an adversary on the base, or the runner is touched with it before he makes base; it being understood, however, that in no instance is a ball to be thrown at him.

## Playing Rules (cont.)

- 14<sup>th</sup>. A player running who shall prevent an adversary from catching or getting the ball before making his base, is a hand out.
- 15<sup>th</sup>. Three hands out, all out.
- 16<sup>th</sup>. Players must take their strike in regular turn.

## Playing Rules (cont.)

- 17<sup>th</sup>. All disputes and differences relative to the game, to be decided by the Umpire, from which there is no appeal.
- 18<sup>th</sup>. No ace or base can be made on a foul strike.

## Playing Rules (cont.)

- 19<sup>th</sup>. A runner cannot be put out in making one base, when a balk is made by the pitcher.
- 20<sup>th</sup>. But one base allowed when a ball bounds out of the field when struck.

WILLIAM R. WHEATON & WILLIAM  
H. TUCKER, Committee on By-Laws

# First Game? Oct. 21, 1845

BASE BALL PLAY — The subjoined is the result of the return match between the New York Base Ball Club and the Brooklyn players, which came off on the ground of the Brooklyn Star Cricket Club yesterday. Messrs Johnson, Wheaton and Van Nostrand were the umpires.

NEW YORK BALL CLUB.			BROOKLYN CLUB.		
	<i>Hands out.</i>	<i>Runs.</i>		<i>Hands out.</i>	<i>Runs.</i>
Davis, . . . . .	2	4	Hunt . . . . .	1	3
Murphy . . . . .	0	6	Hines . . . . .	2	2
Vail . . . . .	2	4	Gilmore . . . . .	3	2
Kline . . . . .	1	4	Hardy . . . . .	2	2
Miller . . . . .	2	5	Sharp . . . . .	2	2
Case . . . . .	2	4	Meyers . . . . .	0	3
Tucker . . . . .	2	4	Whaley . . . . .	2	2
Winslow . . . . .	1	6	Forman . . . . .	1	3
	—	—		—	—
	12	37		12	19

## Rule Changes- 1854

Force outs and vacating bases;

With two outs, runners cannot score if the striker is retired;

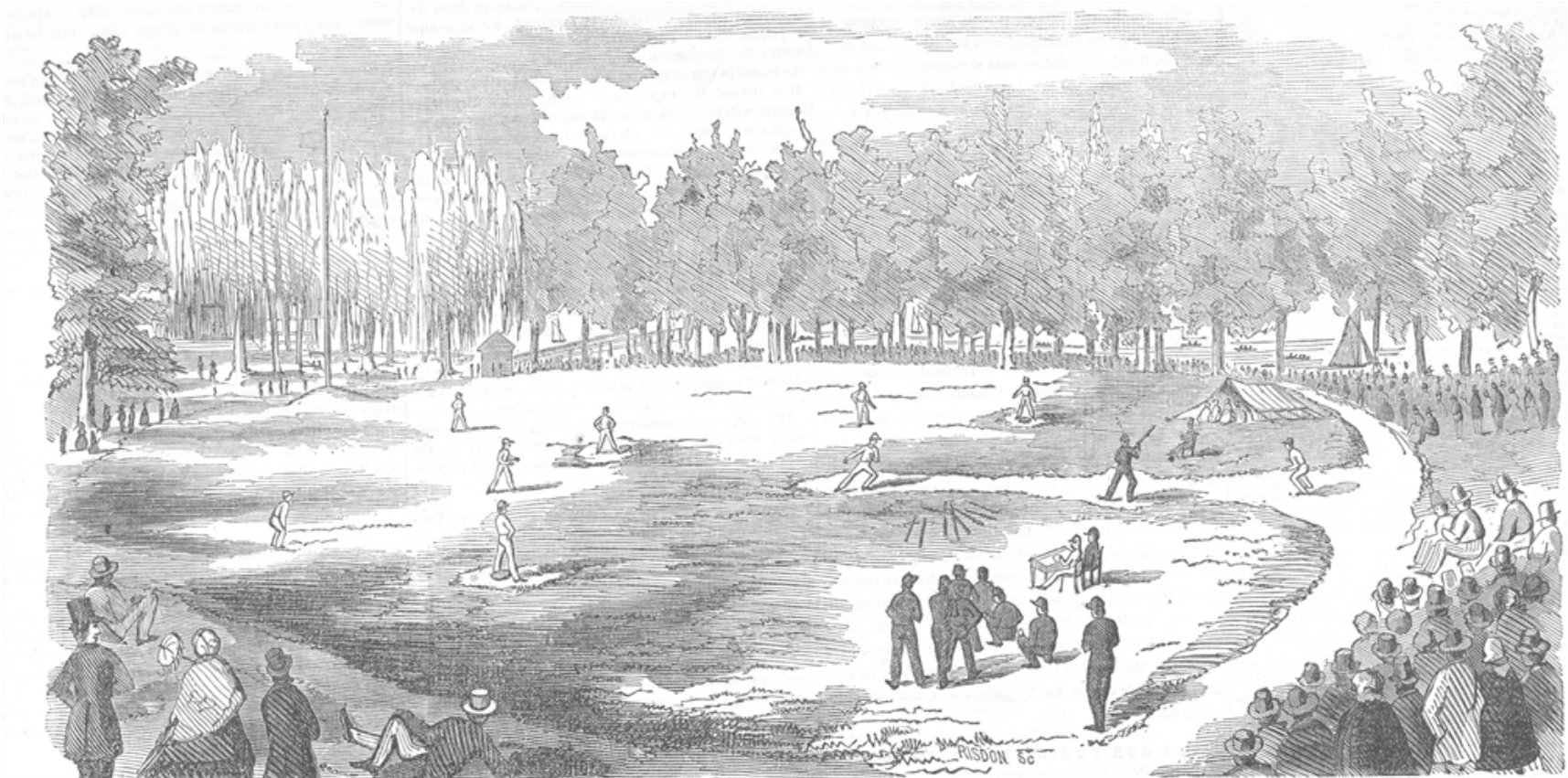
The ball shall weigh from 5 ½ to 6 ounces, and be from 2 ¾ to 3 ½ inches in diameter.

# Publicity!

- *New York Sunday Mercury*
- *New York Clipper*
- *The Spirit of the Times*



# Gotham – Eagles 1857



## Rule Changes- 1857

- Games decided by playing 9 innings, rather than to 21 runs, with a 5-inning minimum.
- Distance between bases set at 30 yards.
- Pitching distance set at 45 feet, from behind a 12' line.

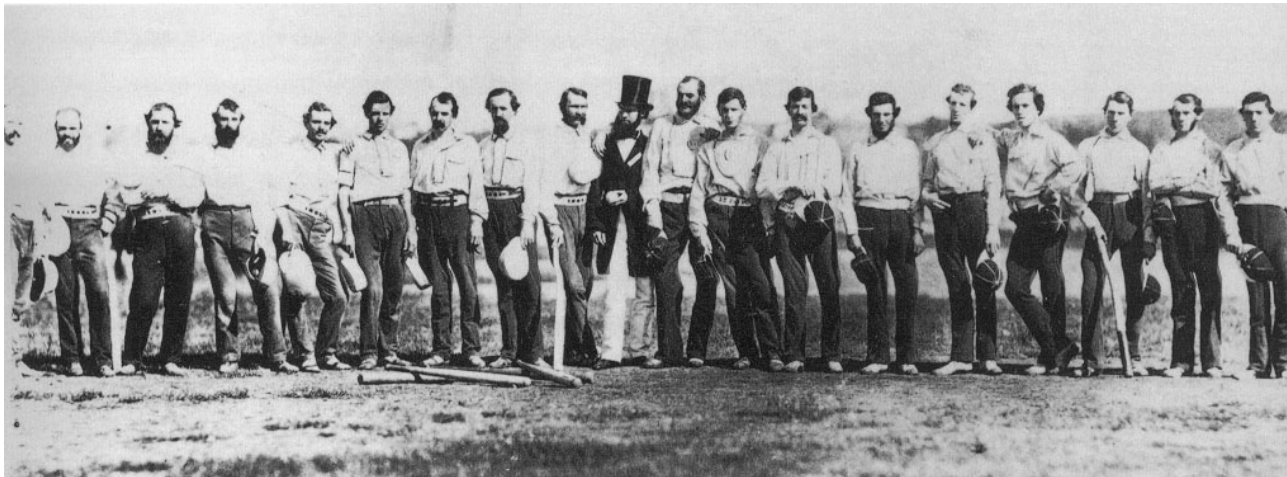
## Rule Changes- 1858

- Foul balls dead until “settled in the hands of the pitcher.” Runners allowed “free backs” on all fouls and on fair caught flies.
- Called strikes.

## Rule Changes- 1859

- Encouraged fly catching by requiring runners to return to their bases on fair caught flies.
- Bats limited to 2 ½ inches in diameter.

# Knickerbockers & Excelsiors 1859



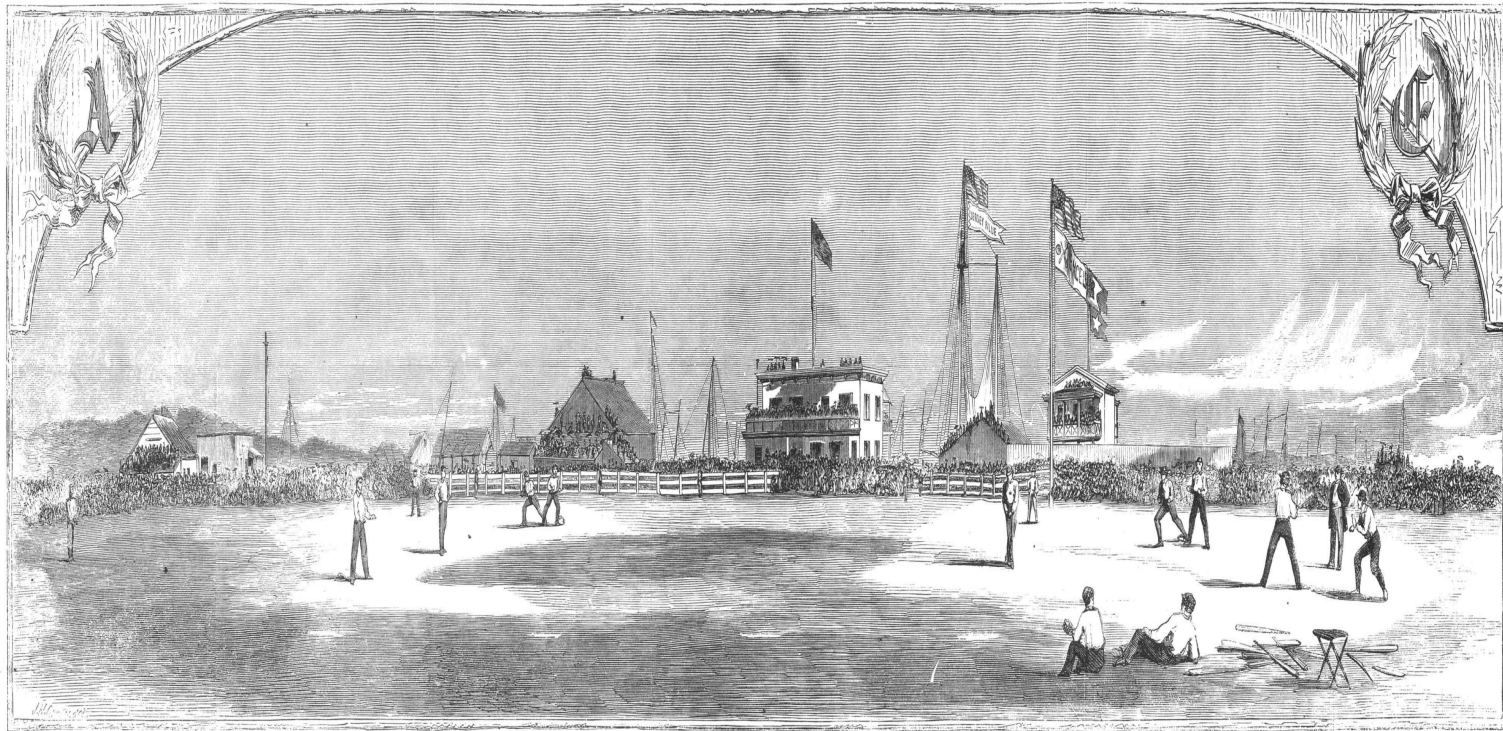
# Pre-Civil War Growth

- Numbers of clubs:
- 1853- 3
- 1857- 14
- 1860- 88 senior clubs in NABBP, 200 new clubs (senior and junior) formed nationwide, 600+ published game reports in 1860.

## Rule Changes- 1860

- The striker is required to stand with one foot on a line that extends three feet on either side of home base and is parallel to the pitcher's line.

# Atlantic – Excelsior 1860



GRAND BASE BALL MATCH FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIP, BETWEEN THE EXCELSIOR AND ATLANTIC CLUBS, OF BROOKLYN, AT THE EXCELSIOR CLUB GROUNDS, SOUTH BROOKLYN, ON THURSDAY, JULY 19.—FROM A SKETCH MADE BY OUR OWN ARTIST.



# The Road to Professionalism- 1



# Birth of Base Ball Statistics

**ATLANTIC CLUB.**

The following is an analysis of the seasons play of those who have played in the first nine of the Atlantic Club during 1860 :

	Players.	Matches played in	Hands lost	Average and over	Runs	Average and over	Highest score in a match.	Clear scores	Matches in which no runs were made.	Most hands lost	Least hands lost	Home runs	Struck out		
1	Boorum . . .	4	19	4	3	2	0	0	1	0	6	4	0	0	
2	Bliss . . . . .	1	5	5	0	2	2	0	2	0	5	5	0	0	
3	Babcock . . .	1	3	3	0	1	1	0	1	0	3	3	0	0	
4	Hamilton . . .	8	22	2	6	13	1	5	4	1	1	5	0	0	0
5	Hawkshurst . .	3	10	9	1	4	1	1	4	0	0	4	3	1	0
6	J. Oliver . . .	12	29	2	5	24	2	0	4	1	2	4	0	3	0
7	Joe Oliver . . .	16	39	2	7	29	1	13	3	0	2	5	1	1	0
8	M. O'Brien . .	14	16	3	4	25	1	11	5	1	4	6	1	0	0
9	P. O'Brien . .	13	39	2	13	25	1	12	3	0	2	5	1	1	0
10	Pearce . . . .	16	46	2	14	37	2	5	5	0	0	5	1	1	0
11	Price . . . . .	15	37	2	7	38	2	8	5	0	1	4	1	2	1
12	Smith . . . . .	16	36	2	4	40	2	8	6	1	1	5	0	0	0
13	F. Spinsoth . .	8	23	2	7	17	2	1	5	0	2	4	1	0	0
14	G. Spinsoth . .	3	6	2	0	11	3	2	6	0	0	4	0	0	1
15	R. Spinsoth . .	1	3	3	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	3	3	0	0
16	Ticknor . . . .	3	8	2	2	10	3	1	5	0	0	3	2	0	0
17	Thwaites . . .	1	1	1	0	2	2	0	2	0	0	1	1	0	0
18	Webber . . . .	2	6	3	1	5	2	1	3	0	0	4	2	0	0

## Effect of the War- 1861

- Games reported in the *Sunday Mercury*:

May- 22 in 1860; 1 in 1861

June- 31 between senior clubs alone in 1860; 18 of all types (senior, junior, school, camp, intrasquad), in 1861

# 1862 Developments

- Fully enclosed grounds
- Intercity play

# Road to Professionalism- 2



# 1863 Developments

- Controlling speed pitchers

Back line

Foot placement

Called balls

# A Permanent American Institution

- ...the success attendant upon the progress of base ball during the past three seasons of the existence of civil war, not only affords evidence of the great popularity of the game, but also of its complete establishment as a permanent American institution.
  - ---*New York Clipper*