

**HISTORY OF THE CALIFORNIA INTERSCHOLASTIC FEDERATION**  
**SOUTHERN SECTION (CIFSS)**

111th historical “tidbit.”  
Dr. John S. Dahlem



1936  
Ted Williams



1936  
Jack Robinson

**POMONA 20-30 BASEBALL TOURNAMENT**  
**Jack (“Jackie”) Robinson vs. Ted Williams in High School – 1936**

Information for this “tidbit” was gleaned from:  
Scott Schroeder, Historian  
Jim McConnell, “Pomona Progress-Bulletin”  
Fred Clair, “Pomona Progress-Bulletin” Editor  
Shav Glick, Author  
Allan Lagumbay, Pomona Public Library  
Bill Nowlin, Author, *The Kid*  
Rick Smith, San Diego Historian  
Articles from the Pomona Progress-Bulletin 1930’s  
CIF-SS holdings including video of the 1938 Championship Game



Pomona Baseball  
Coach  
Stan Acres



One of the best overall summaries of the tournament is written by Jim McConnell:

**McConnell: Pomona Tourney was Historic**

*Jim McConnell, who writes a weekly Then & Now column, writes about the disappearance of the Pomona Elks baseball tournament - 2009*

Unfortunately, the tournament is no more. For its final 40 years, the tourney was run by the Pomona Elks Lodge. The lodge is also no more. It is sad that something so much a part of the Valley’s sporting scene has disappeared from view. But the membership of the lodge grew old, retired, moved away and died. There just wasn’t anyone left to man the tourney.

With its 32-team field and utilization of several sites, the tourney was definitely manpower intensive. It all began in the spring of 1933, when Pomona High baseball coach Stan Acres was able to sell members of the Pomona 20-30 Club on the idea. The event started with an eight-team field, but quickly grew. At its height, the tourney boasted a 48-team field, attracting most of the top high school baseball teams in Southern California.

By the time the Pomona Elks Lodge took over sponsorship, in 1962, the tourney was a staple of the Southland sports scene. How big was it? Well, by 1935 it was big enough to attract Will Rogers as the keynote speaker at its pre-tourney banquet, and California Governor Frank Merriam to throw out the first

ball. The 1935 Pomona Tournament was indeed historic. At Acres' urging, the Muir Tech team was invited to the tournament. This meant the presence of "colored" players in the tourney, and in Pomona, for the first time. So, long before he broke the major league's color line, Jackie Robinson was a pioneer in race relations. Still, in a sign of the times, while all the other players on the other teams were housed for the tourney in Pomona, Robinson was not. He had to travel back and forth from Pasadena to Pomona each day of the five-day event.

More remarkably, probably the two most influential players of the post-Babe Ruth Era, Robinson and Ted Williams, were key players in the 1936 tourney.

Muir Tech and San Diego Hoover met in the consolation finale at Pomona High, with Hoover prevailing 8-7. In that game, Hoover's Williams hit a 450-foot home run and Robinson had three hits and stole home. The press account of that game, in the Pomona Progress-Bulletin, is believed to be the first time a sports writer (in this case, David Meiklejohn) mentioned how worthy Robinson was of a major league contract, were it not for the color of his skin.

In many ways, the 1936 tourney may have been the biggest high school sporting event ever held in Southern California.

On the rosters of the 24 teams entered in the tournament were no less than 10 future major leaguers, and 45 future professional players. In addition to Robinson and Williams, the tourney included Monrovia's Johnny Lindell, Glendale's Bob Dillinger, El Centro's Bob Elliott, Citrus' Red Embree, Long Beach Poly's Chuck Stevens and Jack Brewer and Santa Barbara's Bill Lillard.

Interestingly, the best team in the 1935 field – San Diego High – failed to produce a major leaguer. It did, however, produce a dozen future pros. And it won the tournament.

By 1935, the city of Pomona had gotten behind the tourney, 100 percent. The city's restaurants provided free meals to the players. Town folk opened up their homes for players to sleep over. The championship game was broadcast by a local radio station. And Mickey Rooney was recruited from Hollywood to throw out the first ball at the championship game. Actually, Rooney was filling in for another MGM star who couldn't make it that day – Clark Gable.

The tourney program from 1935 has become quite a collectors' item. Even more historic is a panoramic photo taken of all the players in the tourney, prior to the first game at Pomona High. There is Williams, smiling in his Hoover uniform, and only a few rows over a serious-looking Robinson, in his Muir Tech togs. Both appear younger than springtime, images of greatness caught early.

The tourney's collection of baseball talent soon had scouts flocking to the event. By the late 1940s, it was not unusual to see scouts from virtually every major league and Pacific Coast League team in attendance at the tourney. The trend continued well into the 1990s. By that time, baseball coaches from most Southland colleges would also be on hand.

**The Pomona tournament became an Easter week ritual in the Valley. Eventually, over 150 future major leaguers played in it, including Hall of Famers Robinson, Williams, Ralph Kiner (Alhambra), Duke Snider (Compton), Eddie Mathews (Santa Barbara), Dick Williams (Pasadena), Bob Lemon (Long Beach Wilson) and Rollie Fingers (Upland).**

Also playing in the tournament were future football stars Glenn Davis (Bonita), Pet Scharbarum (Covina) and Anthony Munoz (Chaffey). Even future NBA All-Star Greg Ballard (Garey) played, along with future major league umpires Ed Runge (San Diego) and Dana DeMuth (Chaffey).

Among current major leaguers, Jason Giambi (South Hills) and Mark Kotsay (Santa Fe) are proud "graduates" of the Pomona Tournament. Unfortunately, they are the last of the breed.

**Ralph Kiner**  
**Alhambra**



**Dick Williams**  
**Pasadena**



**Rollie Fingers**  
**Upland**



UPLAND		
League: Tri-County		
Coach: Bill Wolfe		
Player's Name	Position	Year
9 Cameron, Scott	Outfield	12
38 Campbell, Brian	3rd Base	11
3 Shoji, David	Shortstop	11
5 Milakovich, Dan	2nd Base	12
8 Hawkins, Ken	Pitcher	12
32 Hawkins, Norm	1st Base	11
33 Harmon, Dean	Catcher	9
7 Koker, Steve	Pitcher, 3rd Base	10
28 Middlewart, Rodney	Pitcher	11
2 Fingers, Rollie	Pitcher	11
11 Regan, Jerry	Outfield	11
1 Kotwica, Joe	Outfield	12
35 Hobson, Bob	Catcher	12
6 Shattuck, Ken	1st Base	12
12 Brownless, Art	Outfield	11

The CIF-SS was very interested in the tournament as indicated in their "Monthly Bulletin" of May 1938:

## C. I. F., SOUTHERN SECTION MONTHLY BULLETIN

Vol. 1

MAY, 1938

No. 9

### THE POMONA BASEBALL TOURNAMENT

The Sixth Annual Invitational Baseball Tournament sponsored by the Pomona High School and managed by the Pomona 20-30 Club, was held in Pomona and vicinity Thursday, Friday and Saturday, April 14-16.

The 1933 tournament, the first of the series, was a success and each year the tournament has gotten bigger and better. The one just held was the biggest and best of the Pomona Tournaments. We think there is little question that it was the biggest and best baseball tournament ever held.

Forty-eight teams were entered. They came from San Diego on the south to Bakersfield, Taft and San Luis Obispo on the north. In no other activity of the C.I.F. schools, except our Annual Track and Field Meet, do so many schools take part or so many boys compete. The set up for the tournament had been carefully worked out. Everything moved with clock-like precision. The fields were in fine shape. The officiating was excellent. Even the weather man was on his best behavior. These things all helped to make the affair the great success that it was.

Long Beach Poly. High School won the Championship round and Compton High School won the Consolation round. Both teams played fine ball and deserved to win.

In February, 1933, when a rumor reached the C. I. F. Office that a group of young fellows in Pomona were planning to put on a baseball tournament we asked the Executive Committee what attitude was to be assumed toward the proposal. The Executive Committee made up at that time of Mr. H. J. Moore, Mrs. F. W. Oliver and Mr. Kinter Hamileon, were unanimous in the opinion that the project was not feasible and we were directed not to grant a sanction for the tournament.

Mr. Patrick Dennis Ahearn of the 20-30 Club, who claimed that the tournament idea was his brain child, visited the C.I.F. Office and plead for an opportunity to place the matter before the Executive Committee. He was directed to appear at the next Executive Committee meeting. He brought with him Mr. Howard Reynolds and Mr. Adolph Soloman.

The three young men were good salesmen and a sanction was granted for the first tournament providing the Pomona High School would sponsor the activity and accept responsibility for its proper management. The Executive Committee was unconvinced that Mr. Ahearns had not had a brain storm instead of a brain child, but as baseball in Southern California high schools seemed about "on its last legs" it was reasoned that no particular harm could come to the C.I.F. if the tournament was a flop.

The banquet for the boys and coaches the evening of the first day of the tournament has always been a headliner. In 1934 the immortal

Will Rogers gave the boys a full hour of the best fun and entertainment any crowd of boys ever had. For the past three years Joe E. Brown and Sheriff Eugene Biscailuz have furnished a major part of the entertainment at the banquet. The banquet was held the first two years in the men's dining hall at Pomona College. It out-grew this room and was moved to the Pomona Women's Club. This year it had to be moved to larger quarters and was taken to the dining room at the Los Angeles County Fair Ground. Thursday evening, April 12, nearly 700 men and boys enjoyed a fine meal together. Sheriff Biscailuz, Joe E. Brown and others put on an hour of fun and entertainment that will be long remembered by every one who was present.

Friday morning, April 15, the General Mills, Inc., makers of the breakfast food "Wheaties", furnished breakfast for all the boys at the grandstand on the Pomona High School ground. They also gave a case of "Wheaties" to each boy who got a home run during the tournament.

The Helms Athletic Foundation, the Los Angeles and the Hollywood teams from the Pacific Coast Baseball League, each contributed this year to the fund for paying the umpires. The officiating was good throughout. In the final game three Los Angeles City schoolmen, Jim Bradford, John Muir Jr. High; Tony Galindo, Roosevelt High, and Ray Smith, Jordan High, officiated. The work was done in "big league" style.

The tournament has been a life saver for high school baseball in Southern California. It may never become world famous like the New Year's game in the Rose Bowl, but it will doubtless for a long time be like the Rose Bowl game the greatest athletic event in its class.

#### Box score of the final game

	AB	H	R
Polyschnic	31	11	5
2b. Skeber	3	0	1
1b. Pickett	5	2	2
SS. Currie	3	0	0
RF Orman	5	4	1
3b. Burris	4	3	1
C. Seifert	4	1	0
CF Young	3	0	0
LF Crish	2	1	0
P. Slaveson	2	0	0
Total	31	11	5

W. Wilson			
C. Evans	3	1	0
LF Davis	4	0	0
3b. Bockman	3	1	1
SS. Leman	3	0	0
CF Skeith	3	0	0
RF Brown	3	0	0
1b. O'Brien	3	1	0
2b. Waxman	4	0	0
P. Robison	3	1	0
Total	30	4	1

# History of the Tournament

by FRED CLAIRE

Progress-Bulletin Sports Editor

The year was 1933 and the depression was on. High schools were forced to cut their budgets and many were eliminating baseball, the national past-time.

In Pomona, however, baseball had a solid supporter in high school principal Henry P. Reynolds. A young Pomona High baseball coach named Stan Acres also believed the depression shouldn't mean the end of baseball.

Another young fellow who was against the death of baseball was Dennis (Pat) Ahern, who had been a student manager of athletic teams for Acres at Pomona High and in 1933 was attending Pomona Junior College.

Looking for a way to give baseball a helping hand, Ahern and Acres hit upon the idea of a tournament.

The energetic young Ahern took the idea to the CIF, the governing body of high schools. The CIF met the idea with a cold shoulder, stating it wasn't logical in times of depression. Besides, there never had been a high school baseball tournament in Southern California and only a few elsewhere in the country.

Ahern, however, was given permission to take the proposal to the executive committee of the CIF. Ahern and Reynolds made a strong pitch before the executive committee. The committee agreed to grant a sanction for the first tournament providing Pomona High School would sponsor the activity and accept the responsibility for its management.

Baseball in Southern California seemed on its last legs and it was reasoned that no particular harm could come to the CIF if the tournament was a flop.

The first invitational baseball tournament was held on a weekend, May 5 and 6, 1933. It was sponsored by the Pomona 20-30 Club, of which Ahern was a member, and Pomona High.

This year's tournament is the 28th annual. It's co-sponsored by the Elks Lodge of Pomona, which obtained the event under the leadership of Exalted Ruler Lew Greeman, and Pomona High.

The 20-30 Club won't have a hand in this year's tournament. It had sponsored the event up to 1960 except in the war years of 1943-44-45. No tournament was held in 1943 while the city recreation department took over the event in 1944 and 1945. The Kiwanis Club of Greater Pomona sponsored the tournament the past two years.

Only one tournament has been rained out, in 1958, with only a few games played.

No tournament in the country can claim as many participants who have gone on to major league fame as the Pomona event. The list includes the likes of Duke Snider, Jackie Robinson, Vern Stephens, Bob Skinner, Eddie Mathews, Ted Williams, Del Crandall, Don Larsen, Ewell Blackwell, Johnny Lindell, Ralph Kiner and last year's "Rookie of the Year" in the National League, Ken Hubbs. This barley scratches the surface.

Pomona's pride, of course, is its own Marty Keough, now wit' Cincinnati. Pomona High also produced Bill Singer, who pitched the Red Devils to their only tourney championship in 1961 when he defeated Glendale 8-0 with a one-hit performance. Singer is one of the most prized young pitchers in the Los Angeles Dodger organization.

The first tournament in 1933, with Ahren as the director, attracted 28 teams. Entry wise, the tournament reached its peak in 1938 and 1939 when 48 teams competed each year.

There are 32 teams in the tournament this year, and Glendale High will be defending the championship title after defeating Pasadena 5-3 in last season's finals.

Glendale has been in the finals the past three years. The Dynamiters beat Pomona High for the title in 1960, and lost to the Red Devils in 1961 before regaining the crown last year.

This year the tourney officials are paying tribute to Stan Acres, a man who played a big part in starting the tourney in 1933 and who had coached Pomona High baseball teams since 1928 before retiring as a coach at the end of last season.



STAN ACRES

Honorary Tournament Chairman

The 20-30 Club was created as a service and leadership club for young men. It was also referred to as the Active 20-30 Club International.

In April 1936, Commissioner Patten stated, "...that if the Pomona Tournament had not come along, baseball would be on its way out in Southern California." He was skeptical of the tournament at first and was astounded in the early success and was pleased to note that other areas in Southern California were copying the format including the San Diego area.

This short April 1936 article from the "Progress-Bulletin" is indicative of the fervor for the tournament:

BY DAVE MEIKLEJOHN

It was a day in February, 1933, and not an unusual day; in fact if the birdies were twirping nobody in Stan Acres' history class at Pomona high school gave heed; for news had just been received that the Citrus Belt league had, in august council, decided to drop baseball.

Stan Acres was greatly concerned, because besides delighting in dates which few of his students could remember, his heart and thoughts already were beginning to drift to the baseball diamond, where he ruled the roost as head coach.

One of his students that day was Denis (Pat) Ahern, perennial student, who was being kept after school because he couldn't recall the exact date and hour when Rube Waddell was signed by Connie Mack's Athletics.

"Bother this trash," remarked Acres unacademically, throwing a brand new copy of "The Truth of Why Rome Burned," out the nearest window.

"Now, Denis," he continued, "I want you to tell me what we're going to do about baseball; that is, how we are going to do without it."

If it had been a question of the "Rise and Fall of the Greek Empire"—a question which he can answer glibly today as a promotor of wrestlers—Ahern at that time would have drawn a flunk. But on baseball, he was prepared.

"Say," he said, "all these schools have invitational ping pong, basketball tournaments, track meets, relay meets, swimming meets, why the—pardon me, professor!—can't we have an invitational baseball tournament?"

And so they did, and are.

# Gov. Merriam, Film Notables Will Boost Big Invitational

## Honor Guest



GOVERNOR FRANK MERRIAM brings to the tournament this year its greatest recognition when he appears Saturday for the championship game to throw the first ball. Participating also in the "big game" opening ceremonies will be Irvin S. Cobb, writer and film actor, and Mickey Rooney, boy comedy star.

Adding color to the programs in connection with the fourth annual tournament, several notables, including Governor Merriam, Irvin S. Cobb, Joe E. Brown, Mickey Rooney, Sheriff Eugene Biscailuz, and others, will participate in events Thursday evening and Saturday afternoon. Joe E. Brown will be the principal speaker at the Thursday night fellowship banquet in the Ebell clubhouse, with Sheriff Biscailuz and their two sons also guests of the 20-30 club for that occasion. Two years ago Will Rogers appeared as speaker at the banquet, and gave a never-to-be-forgotten performance, and in obtaining Brown the club is keeping up the tradition of getting outstanding figures in the entertainment world for their feature dinner, which comes after completion of the first round, when all players are on hand for the occasion.

A sports enthusiast in many fields, Joe E. Brown's first love is baseball. Many of his comedies have had a baseball background and in one way or another he always has been interested in promotion of the game; so that the boys know they will have a real friend speaking to them on their favorite subject. Sheriff Biscailuz has been a strong booster for the tournament from the very beginning, and hasn't missed one of the banquets since the first invitational.

"Howdy" Reynolds, now in the real estate business near Hollywood, is responsible for the entertainment arrangements, having been entertainment chairman for the first two tournaments sponsored here. For Saturday's program, Reynolds obtained the consent of Gov. Merriam to throw the first ball in the championship game Saturday, and Irvin S. Cobb, famous author and film actor, together with Mickey Rooney, boy actor, have consented to help the governor.

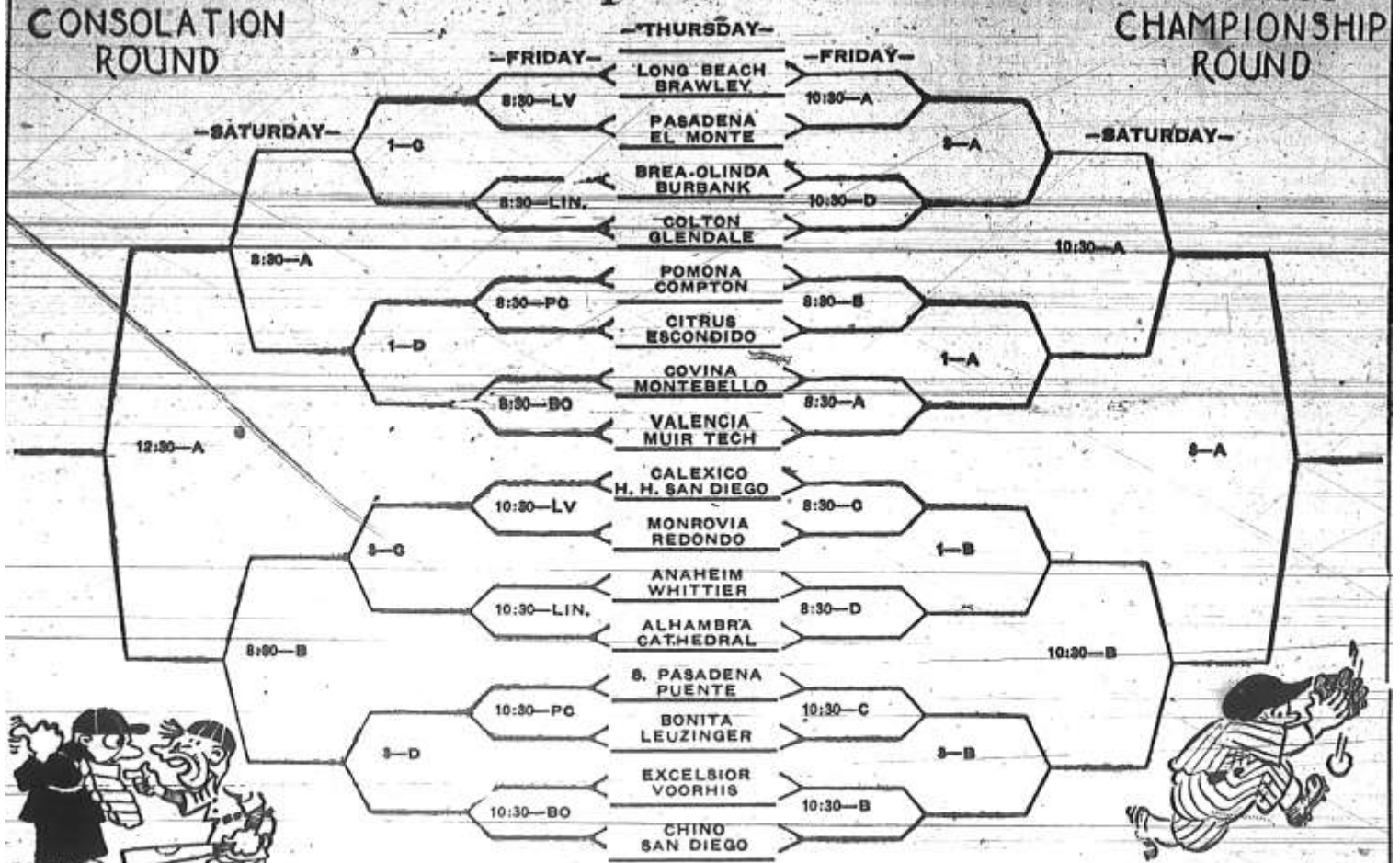
News flashes of the tournament will be taken by Hearst-Metrotone News Thursday afternoon at 1 o'clock and on Saturday for the final game, and these will be distributed thruout the United States.

## Yap! It's Joe!



THRU THE biggest human "yap" known to history, or the movies, Joe E. Brown will speak to 400 boys at the Ebell clubhouse Thursday night, occasion of the annual fellowship banquet. Besides Joe, his son and Sheriff Eugene Biscailuz and his son will be guests at the banquet.

# Chart Shows 'Lineup' For Tournament Games



\*For starting times of all Thursday morning and afternoon games as listed above, see adjoining tournament story, listing games.

How to read the above chart: Legend of the fields: "A" field is the north diamond at Pomona high school; "B" field is the south diamond at Pomona high school; "C" field is the Spanish-American field at Main street and Grand avenue; "D" field is the Fremont junior high school field; "LV" refers to the LaVerne college field; "Lin" refers to the Lincoln grammar school diamond in LaVerne; "BO" refers to the Bonita high school diamond in LaVerne; "PC" refers to the Pomona college diamond in Claremont.

The tournament committee announces that Pomona high school will play on the high school diamond whether it wins or loses in the first round; so that the field will be changed accordingly in event of a loss by the Red Devils on Thursday morning. In other words, if Pomona defeats Compton it plays the winner of the Citrus-Escondido game on the south diamond at 8:30 Friday morning; if Pomona loses to Compton it plays the first consolation bracket game against the loser of the Citrus-Escondido game on the "B" diamond instead of at Pomona college, the two winners being assigned to Pomona college field instead.

## Mickey Rooney Tourney Guest



(1936 Bracket)

Will Rodgers

Sheriff Biscailuz



*Muir Tech High School - 1935*



Front row-far right Shortstop "Jack" Robinson

*Muir Tech High School - 1936*



Catcher Jack Robinson 2<sup>nd</sup> row....2<sup>nd</sup> from left



*San Diego Hoover High School*  
*Pitcher and outfielder Ted Williams - 1935 at Pomona Tournament*



Hoover team at **Pomona Tournament**, Ted Williams in center, rear.

*Pitcher and outfielder Ted Williams - 1936*



Hoover High Cardinals, 1936. Left to right: First row: Todd (Mgr.), Siraton, Douthit, DeLauer, Nieumiester, Bell, Oliver, Mitchell, Collins (Mgr.). Second row: Coach Caldwell, Johnson, Ballinger, Monsees, Curtis, Ondler, Villarino, Bennett, Fraim (Mgr.). Third row: Brown (Mgr.), Engle, McBurnie, Williams, Bickerton, Means, Helm, Highley (Mgr.)

In 1935, Ted Williams led the Cardinals of San Diego Hoover High battling .466 as a pitcher and center fielder. In 1936, he hit a home run that went through an adjoining baseball field during a game in which Jack Robinson was playing. He made the All-Tournament team in 1936. Unfortunately, they got his name wrong in the write-up:

Led by Big Bill Williams, pitcher and-outfielder, Herbert Hoover high Cardinals from San Diego rang up another record score in defeating South Pasadena high, 13 to 1, in a semi-final consolation round game. The lanky Hoover star smacked two home runs and a single in the six-inning game, hurled some of the game and then rested for the final contest this afternoon. The score:

	R	H	E
South Pasadena	000	100	1 3 6
Herbert Hoover	011	1-10	13 11 4

Parmenter and Van Essen; Williams, Oliver and Engle.



Jack "Jackie" was a shortstop in the 1935 20-30 Pomona Tournament and received a special award for his base stealing prowess. He was called the "steal of the tournament" as he "pilfered" 11 bases. Even with his base stealing prowess he did not make the first or second All Tournament Team. He was named All Tournament in 1936 as a catcher. It is interesting to see how they referred to the first black player in the tournament:

### Base Stealing Profitable

Base-stealing feats of Jack "Smoky" Robinson, catcher, supplied Mulr Technical high school of Pasadena with two runs and the margin of victory in a 4 to 3 battle against Coach Ted Gorrell's Covina Colts in an early morning championship round game today. Robinson stole five bases in the six-inning game, boosting his total for the tournament to six, which tops the field. He was the champion sack snatcher of last year's tourney when Tech went to the final game against Long Beach. In the third inning, Robinson stole home. Keene and Nichols supplied the punch for the Colts, Keene hitting a home run in the first, Nichols a triple to score Keene in the fourth. The score:

		R	H	E
Covina	100 200—3	4	4	
Mulr Tech	101 101—4	5	2	
Batteries: Nichols and Perso- nette; Doolan and Robinson.				



*Seth Van Patten, CIF-SS Commissioner, throwing at the first ball in 1938.*



*“Big bat” during opening ceremonies – 1938*



*Long Beach Poly Winners of 1938 Tournament*



Championship Smiles and Trophies



Champions of the sixth annual 28-30 club institutional baseball tournament! That's the tale that reads in Long Beach Poly high school's baseball team Saturday afternoon when the victoriously defeated Redwood High of Long Beach, 5 to 2, in the championship game. In center above, Redwood's manager of 28-30 club's single committee is presenting the championship trophy, donated by General Mills, Inc., members of H.P. Union, to Captain Derry, Redwood manager of the Poly club. Above, Derry was the star of the final game. He has been named the 28-30 club's first pitcher in the list of the eight players Long Beach sent to the club. Below left, Captain Derry, Longwood manager, lower division team receives the championship trophy for the second consecutive year. Redwood is presenting the trophy to Joe Miller, Captain center, while Coach Frank Powers of the Turkeys stands by. Lower right, Parker Salzman of Poly, the batting star of the tournament, hit five runs in the second inning of the final. He is a brother of Jack Johnson of the Los Angeles Angels.

**Prep Baseball Dead? According to These 300 Youngsters Gathered at Pomona the Horsehide Sport Is a Mighty Lively Corpse**

From San Diego to Lewis, teams, the diamond was returned into Pomona yesterday for the three-day baseball festival, sponsored by the 20-30 Club. This annual event attracts the finest prep baseball clubs in the Southland and this year's entry is no exception to the rule, as this photo taken at the Pomona High School indicates. The building across was closed last night at Pomona College. E. A. Stuart donated the trophy for the competition, which must be won three times before going into permanent possession of any school. (Photo by Peabody of Pomona)



Last Thursday evening I heard the leader of the Pomona 20-30 club give reasons why his club is again sponsoring a baseball tournament for high school teams. "We have seen the national pastime dying in our schools. If this condition continues the death of baseball as an American sport is only a matter of time. Our tournaments have been the means of recreating interest in baseball in a number of schools as well as providing a competitive series for the boys who profit in sportsmanship and better citizenship. The American Legion has long recognized the need for junior baseball and last year fostered teams throughout the nation which registered a total of approximately 500,000 boys of 16 years and under. The American and National leagues, recognizing the value of the Legion junior baseball program, contribute large sums of money annually for its perpetuation. As a member of the Legion I commend the program of the Pomona 20-30 club and wish these young men success in their undertaking.

*Mythical 20-30 Pomona All Star Team*  
*1933-1982*

1933 to 1982

POMONA TOURNAMENT HAS OFFERED 50 YEARS OF THRILLS

By Jim McConnell  
Asst. Sports Editor  
Pomona Progress Bulletin

The year was 1933. It was a time before a war was won, a war was tied, a war was lost. A time before anyone thought of changing their name ... or their sex. A time when the valley was a simpler place, dotted with orange groves instead of freeways.

In the spring of that year, Pomona High School coach Stan Acres and local sports promoter Pat Ahern were bemoaning the fact that there was nothing for local high school students to do during the Easter week break. The two hit on the idea of a baseball tournament and the rest, as they say, is history.

And what a history! Through the years, thousands of prep athletes have had a chance to show their stuff on the baseball diamond during the Pomona Tournament. Sponsors for the tourney have changed through the years, first the Pomona 20-30 Club, then the Kiwanis, then the current sponsor, Pomona Elks Lodge No. 789. However, one thing has remained consistent ... the tourney annually has provided fans with outstanding baseball.

Three years back, this writer sat down with Stan Acres and had a great time reliving with Stan some of the highlights of past tourneys. Reluctantly, Stan agreed to name an all-time all-tourney team.

Being the type of man he was, Stan wanted to make sure no one deserving was left off the team. Thus our little chat developed into a six hour session of baseball name-dropping, but the final result proved to be most interesting.

Stan came up with a 9 man team which, undoubtedly, could compete with any other baseball team ever assembled, even the 1927 N.Y. Yankees. Here is Stan's all-time Pomona Tournament team:

Catching -- Del Crandall, the former Milwaukee Braves star (now managing at Albuquerque in the PCL) who played in the tourney for Fullerton High in the late 1940's.

First Base -- Dee Fondy, who went from playing in the tourney for San Bernardino High to the major leagues with the Cubs, Pirates and Reds in the 1950s.

Second Base -- Kenny Hubbs, a star at Colton High and a star with the Chicago Cubs who set major league fielding records in the early 1960s. Tragically, Hubbs lost his life in an airplane crash in the prime of his baseball career.

Shortstop -- Jackie Robinson, Pasadena High to UCLA to the Brooklyn Dodgers to baseball's Hall of Fame. The man who broke the color barrier in the major leagues, and the man who Acres said was the greatest competitor he ever saw.

Third Base -- Eddie Mathews, Santa Barbara High to the Braves and to the Hall of Fame.

Left Field -- Ted Williams, a star in the tourney for San Diego Hoover High in the 1930s who became baseball's last .400 hitter with the Boston Red Sox. "The best hitter I ever saw, bar none," said Acres.

Center Field -- Duke Snider, who performed in the tourney in the mid-1940s for Compton High and became a superstar, and eventual Hall of Famer, with the Dodgers.

Left Field -- Marty Keough, a sensational athlete for Acres at Pomona High in the early 1950s who was the valley's first "bonus baby" back in 1952, signing a \$65,000 contract with the Red Sox. His 10-year major league career was hampered somewhat by injuries, and more by having the misfortune of playing for the Red Sox when they had the all-star outfield of Ted Williams, Jackie Jensen and Jimmy Piersall. Nonetheless, Acres called Marty the best athlete he ever coached.

Pitcher -- Bill Singer, who pitched in the tourney for Pomona High, in the early 1960s and went on to star with the Los Angeles Dodgers and California Angels.

Some of the Pomona Tourney performers Acres did not list include the following: Vern Stephens, Bob Skinner, Don Larseon, Ewell Blackwell, Johnny Lindell, Albie Pearson, Ralph Kiner, Tom Morgan, Ken McMullen, Doug Bird, Bill Campbell, Lance Parrish and on and on and on.

In fact, over 100 players have gone on from Pomona Tourney action to the big leagues, the latest being California Angel rookie standout outfielder Tom Brunansky, who was an all-tourney pick back in 1976 while a prepster at West Covina High.

The Tourney has had some amazing "spectators" as well down through the years. Speakers at its annual banquet have included Will Rogers and Joe E. Brown, while in 1934 and 1935 Frank Merriam, California Governor threw out the first ball.

In the early years, Stan and Pat Ahern pretty much ran the show, but as the tourney grew in size and stature various other individuals pitched in as tourney directors. In recent years, these have included Carl Bruner, Merle Wooten, Phil LaPierre and Don Hoebel. This year, Lew Greenman is at the controls for the 47th annual event (no tourney was held in 1943 and a couple others were rained out).



**CARRY HOPES OF HOOVER FOR DIAMOND CHAMPIONSHIP**

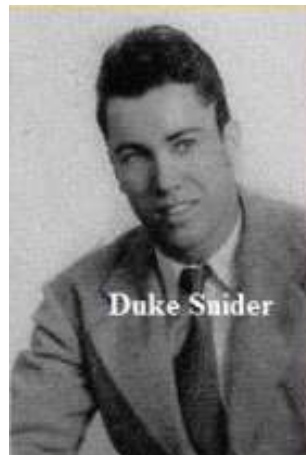


Hopes for a southern California baseball championship rest with the boys shown above, and already they have gone far towards reaching their goal. Reading left to right (front row) they are Ballenger, H. Ondler, Johnson, Bennett, Villarino, Straton, Twiss and McBurnie; (back row) Coach Wofford Caldwell, Means, Helm, W. Ondler, Williams, Bickerton, Engle, Hurst and Fouts.

**Del Crandall**  
**Fullerton High School**



**Duke Snider**  
**Compton High School**



**Bill Singer**  
**Pomona**



**Eddie Mathews**  
**Santa Barbara**



**Bob Lemon**  
**Long Beach Wilson**



**Marty Keough**  
**Pomona**





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Twenty Eighth Annual  
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