



It is with enormous sadness that I note the passing of the Retrosheet Webmaster, Mark Pankin, who passed away on Friday, December 17 when he suffered a heart attack while bicycling. This was an enormous passion of Mark's, along with baseball, of course. See: <http://www.pankin.com/bicycle.htm> for some details. In the past few decades, he participated in hundreds of rides covering thousands of miles.

As for baseball, Mark was the first and only Webmaster for the Retrosheet web page for 30 years. He was extremely conscientious in maintaining and updating the many different pages on the Retrosheet site and he was in the front line to field questions and complaints which he always handled flawlessly. It is hard to imagine the website without his guiding hand.

Mark was a PhD mathematician and a former University Professor at Marshall University. This background led him to groundbreaking baseball research in many areas, notably the use of Markov chain analysis to study such things as lineup optimization. See: <https://retrosheet.org/Research/PankinM/PhillyNews1.htm> for an entertaining application of this work. He studied many other aspects of the game, making dozens of presentations at the Bob Davids Washington chapter of SABR and the SABR national convention. See: <https://www.retrosheet.org/Research/Research.htm> and scroll down to Mark's name. In 2019, his detailed study of Batting Out of Turn (BOOT) won the annual Doug Pappas Award for the best presentation at the SABR convention. His other research papers on the Retrosheet site, covering 1993 to 2021, are all well worth reading.

On the personal level, Mark was a genuine friend and a marvelously gentle man. He helped many researchers navigate the Retrosheet site and assisted with custom programming in many cases. A lifelong Tigers fan (Al Kaline was his favorite player), Mark was a member of the Mayo Smith Society. His whimsical side shown through with his license plate which was "NO DH".

Mark will be greatly missed by many, many people.

Dave Smith  
Retrosheet