

# Imperfect Perfectos (1901-2019)

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According to *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary*, the definition of “perfecto” is “a cigar that is thick in the middle and tapers at each end.” That is the only meaning given for “perfecto” in *Webster's*. However, according to *The Dickson Baseball Dictionary*, “perfecto” is a “Synonym of *perfect game* — ‘David Wells Perfecto’ (Sports Illustrated headline, May 25, 1998) regarding the 15th perfect game in major-league history as New York Yankees pitcher blanked the Minnesota Twins on May 17, 1998. 1st use, 1967 ‘[Stan] Bahnsen Hurls Perfecto’ (unknown source headline, July 29).” [NOTE: I was unable to identify the “unknown source headline, July 29” referred to by Dickson — “Bahnsen Hurls Perfecto” — utilizing newspapers.com. Bahnsen pitched a no-hitter for the Syracuse Chiefs on July 09, 1967. The headlines employed in *The (Syracuse, NY) Post-Standard* (July 10, 1967) are “Bahnsen Hurls Perfect Game” (page 1) and “Bahnsen Pitches No-Hitter for Chiefs” (page 21). Presently, I am unable to ascertain the headlines and game descriptions given in the game accounts published in *The (Syracuse, NY) Herald-Journal*, the *Buffalo (NY) Courier-Express*, and *The Buffalo (NY) Evening News*.]

According to *Webster's*, the definition of “imperfect” is simply “not perfect.” For the research results described in this article, an “Imperfect Perfecto” is defined as a game in which one (or more) pitcher(s) faces only 27 opposing batters in a 9-inning shutout victory — with one or more of the opposing batters getting on base, but subsequently being retired on the basepath. So, while a perfect game mandates that each of the 27 batters is retired directly, i.e., without reaching first base, an Imperfect Perfecto is a game in which one or more batters do get on base, but do not score and are not left on base, i.e., are retired on the basepath.

The “Imperfect Perfecto” was coined by me on September 20, 2019, when I attended the game between the Oakland Athletics and the Texas Rangers. In that game the A’s starting pitcher, Mike Fiers, surrendered two hits, a leadoff single to Shin-Soo Choo, who was doubled up with Elvis Andrus in a 6-4-3 GDP (Marcus Semien to Sheldon Neuse to Matt Olson) and a third-inning single to Delino DeShields, who was then retired in a nifty 1-3 pickoff. Fiers then retired each of the next 16 batters. Chris Bassitt relieved Fiers for the top of the ninth inning and set the side down in 1-2-3 order, thereby completing a 27 batters 8-0 whitewashing of the Rangers. It was quite a thrill watching and scoring this game as each frame from the fourth stanza on was a perfect three-up-three-down event. And, as the game proceeded, I wondered how many other pitchers had tossed an Imperfect Perfecto. This article describes the results of my research — with important contributions by Retrosheet’s Dave Smith and Tom Ruane — to answer that query. The period from 1901 through 2019 is covered in this report.

## EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURE

The determination of the Imperfect Perfectos was achieved following four separate but complementary procedures:

[1] Using the list of no-hitters and low-hit games (i.e., one-hitters and two-hitters) provided in the *Baseball Guide* (published annually by The Sporting News from 1952 forward) I checked the Retrosheet box score and PBP to determine which of those games were Imperfect Perfectos. Next, using the list of “Top Individual Performances of 19XY” given on the Retrosheet website, I repeated the process with “Pitching Performances” — “Low-Hit Complete Games” for the 1951-1904 seasons. This gave me a *partial* list of Imperfect Perfectos for this period. The list was *partial* because: (a) For some seasons Retrosheet’s list of the low-hit games included only no-hitters (i.e., the 1915, 1914, and 1906

seasons) or did not include 2-hitters (1951-1940, 1934, 1933, 1918-1904). (b) Only those pitchers with *complete games* are included in the Retrosheet lists — i.e., any low-hit games with multiple pitchers are not included. It is also emphasized that this approach necessarily omitted any Imperfect Perfectos in which three or more hits were made.

[2] Retrosheet's Dave Smith wrote a computer program to extract all games in the Retrosheet data base for the seasons from 1915 forward in which the pitcher(s) faced exactly the minimum 27 batters. For each of the Imperfect Perfectos on Smith's list the following information was provided: (a) the number players who got on base; (b) the number of hits; (c) the number of batters hit by pitched balls; (d) the number of walks; (e) the number of batters who got on base as a consequence of interference; (f) the number of runners caught stealing (if included in the official Day-By-Day records or in the Retrosheet box score); (g) the number of fielding errors; (h) the number of double plays; and (i) the number of triple plays. Not included in the list were the number of players retired via pickoff plays or via being hit by a batted ball. With this list in hand, I proceeded to check the Retrosheet box score and PBP for each game as well as the game accounts in various appropriate newspapers, making certain to identify each instance where a batter was safe on a fielding error and subsequently retired so as to not be left on base. This double-checking fine-tuned the list so it was completely accurate with respect to the number of base runners.

[3] Since Smith's computer program did not cover the seasons prior to 1914, I then checked each shutout game in the seasons from 1912 through 1914 and the 1901 season, using both the Retrosheet box scores and the game accounts provided in various appropriate newspapers.

[4] Retrosheet's Tom Ruane wrote a computer program to extract all games in the Retrosheet data base for the seasons from 1902 through 1911 for which the number of Plate Appearances (PA) equalled the number of Outs (O). I then checked newspaper game accounts for each of these games and identified three Imperfect Perfectos which were not already on my list.

With this four-pronged approach I have ascertained 82 Imperfect Perfectos achieved in the Major Leagues during the 1901-2019 seasons.

## RESULTS

In the 119 seasons during the 1901-2019 period there were 82 Imperfect Perfectos. To facilitate the presentation of the results I have divided the period into four main sections — [A] The Deadball Era (1901-1919); [B] The Pre-Designated Hitter Era (1920-1972); [C] The Designated Hitter Era (1973-1996); [D] The Inter-League Play Era (1997-2019).

Provided for each of these sections is a table presenting a summary of each Imperfect Perfecto, including how the base runners got on base and how the base runners were retired on the basepath. It is pointed out that there are three fundamental ways a batter can get on base: (1) by his own action, i.e., by hitting safely; (2) by the pitcher's action, i.e., by being walked or hit by a pitched ball or by reaching first base on a strikeout-wild pitch combination; (3) by a fielder's action, i.e., by being safe on a fielding error (including reaching first by a strikeout-passed ball combination and catcher's interference). Similarly, there are two fundamental ways in which a base runner can be put out on the basepath: (1) by his own action, e.g., by being caught stealing (including being picked off a base) or by being nabbed trying to take an extra base; (2) by another batter's action, e.g., by being retired as part of a double play or being hit by a batted fair ball. It is also mentioned that a runner can be replaced by another runner — for instance, when a batter hits into a fielder's choice force-out. In that situation, the pitcher has effectively allowed only one runner to reach base. And, if the replacement runner is subsequently retired on the basepath such that there are no runners left on base, the pitcher has achieved an imperfect perfect inning.

[A] DEADBALL ERA

Table 1 presents the list of the 19 Imperfect Perfectos achieved during the Deadball Era. Additional details are provided below for each of the games, including the career won-lost record of the pitcher, the identity of the catcher, the identities of the base runners and how they got on base, and the fielders involved in eliminating the base runners on the basepath.

**Table 1. List of Pitchers with Imperfect Perfectos in the Deadball Era (1901-1919).**

#	Year	Date	Pitcher	Team	OPP	Base Runners On				Base Runners Out	
						Total	Hits	W+	SOE	CS+	DP
01	1902	7-01	Rube Waddell	PHA*	BAL	2	2	—	—	2	—
02	1904	9-24 (1)	Bob Wicker	CHC	BRK*	1	1	—	—	1	—
03	1906	5-17	Sam Leever	PIT*	NYG	3	3	—	—	1	2
04	1906	10-01 (1)	Carl Lundgren	CHC	PHP*	2	2	—	—	2	—
05	1908	6-30	Cy Young	BOS	NYH*	1	—	1	—	1	—
06	1909	9-14	Mordecai Brown	CHC	CIN*	1	1	—	—	—	1
07	1910	5-12	Chief Bender	PHA*	CLE	1	—	1	—	1	—
08	1910	7-29	Ed Summers	DET	CWS*	3	1	2	—	3	—
09	1913	6-10	Walter Johnson	WAS*	DET	3	3	—	—	—	3
10	1914	6-04	Jim Scott	CWS*	CLE	2	1	1	—	2	—
11	1914	10-03	Bob Harmon	PIT*	CIN	2	2	—	—	2	—
12	1915	5-19	Dan Griner	SLC	PHP*	2	2	—	—	1	1
13	1915	9-04	Art Nehf	BSN*	BRK	1	1	—	—	—	1
14	1916	6-29	Eppa Rixey	PHP	NYG*	4	4	—	—	2	2
15	1916	8-20	Jack Coombs	BRK	CHC*	3	1	1	1	2	1
16	1917	6-23 (1)	Babe Ruth (1 BF) Ernie Shore (26 BF)	BOS*	WAS	1 —	— —	1 —	— —	— 1	— —
17	1917	9-18 (1)	Bill Doak	SLC*	BRK	4	2	1	1	2	2
18	1918	8-20	Elmer Jacobs	PHP	SLC*	2	2	—	—	—	2
19	1919	6-12	Herb Pennock	BOS*	CWS	4	3	1	—	2	2

**[1] Rube Waddell** [193 W, 143 L; had three 1-hitters in his Hall of Fame career]; **Ossie Schreckengost [C]** — The first twentieth century Imperfect Perfecto was achieved in the American League's second season by Philadelphia's Rube Waddell and his teammates in the game on July 01, 1902. Waddell fanned 13 Orioles and, thus, was personally responsible for almost half of the 27 outs made by the Baltimore batters. Waddell was also supported by the air-tight defense of his teammates, each of them turning in an errorless performance. But, Waddell yielded two hits. However, thanks to the strong and accurate arm of his catcher the two hits that Waddell surrendered were effectively transformed into outs. In the second stanza, Baltimore's Cy Seymour led off with a single but was promptly caught napping off first by Schreckengost's bullet throw to initial sacker Harry Davis. Then, in the fifth frame, Wilber Robinson singled to left, but was thrown out by Schreck in an attempt to steal second.

**[2] Bob Wicker** [64 W, 52 L; had two 1-hitters in his ML career]; **Johnny Kling [C]** — The first twentieth century Imperfect Perfecto in the National League was accomplished by Bob Wicker of the Chicago Cubs. Had it not been for the seventh-inning single that the game's official scorers credited Brooklyn's Harry Lumley, Wicker would have earned the accolades of hurling a no-hitter. As described in the game account given in *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, "Lumley hit sharply toward first base, the ball bounding well back of the bag, and over toward foul ground. [First baseman Frank] Chance made a splendid stop, and was slightly off his balance when he threw to Wicker at first. The ball went a bit wide, causing Wicker to reach well into the left, but he got it. Lumley had the throw beaten as seen from the grand stand, and a hit was the natural consequence. It was said that umpire Carpenter declared Lumley safe because Wicker took his foot off the base and other arguments were advanced toward allowing Wicker a record game, but the scorers were obdurate. In his anxiety to get the credit of a no hit game, Wicker tried to impress the scorers with the belief that an error was made on the play. Chance and one or two other members of the Chicago team backed him up, but the scorers insisted that a hit was made, and recorded it as such." Nonetheless, Lumley was quickly removed from the basepath, thanks to a 2-6 caught stealing (Kling to Joe Tinker).

**[3] Sam Leever** [194 W, 100 L; had two 2-hitters in his ML career]; **George Gibson [C]** — Despite giving up three hits — a first-inning single by Roger Bresnahan, a sixth-session single by Frank Bowerman, and a seventh-stanza single by Sammy Strang — Pittsburgh's Sam Leever emerged with an Imperfect Perfecto thanks to his infield and catcher. Bresnahan was erased in a quick 6-3 double play (Honus Wagner to Joe Nealon) hit into by George Brown; Bowerman was eliminated on a 4-6-3 GDP started by keystoneer Claude Ritchey on a boulder hit by Joe McGinnity; and Strang was cut down, 2-6, by Gibson attempting to pilfer second.

**[4] Carl Lundgren** [91 W, 55 L; had six 2-hitters in his ML career]; **Pat Moran [C]** — One of the six two-hitters Lundgren authored in his ML career (1902-1909, each season with Chicago) was converted into an Imperfect Perfecto as a consequence of the runners being squashed on the basepath. Sherry Magee collected a second-inning single and was then caught stealing. Paul Santell connected for a single in the seventh session and was then forced out by Kitty Bransfield, who in turn was caught stealing.

**[5] Cy Young** [511 W, 315 L; had 3 No-Hitters in his Hall of Fame career]; **Lou Criger [C]** — After having hurled one no-hitter while playing in the National League for eleven seasons (1890-1900), Denton True Young tossed a pair of no-hitters while pitching on American League soil for the next eleven years (1901-1911), including a perfect game on May 05, 1904 (with Rube Waddell being the opposing pitcher). Young just missed tossing a second perfect game a couple years later, but ended up with an Imperfect Perfecto when, after walking the leadoff batter, Harry Niles, Criger and second baseman, Amby McConnell, combined to thwart Niles's attempt to steal the middle bag. Young thus became the first pitcher to hurl two complete-game shutouts while facing the 27 minimum number of batters in each contest.

**[6] Mordecai Brown** [239 W, 130 L; had six 1-hitters in his Hall of Fame career]; **Jimmy Archer [C]** — Of the six one-hitters tossed by Brown one was transformed into an Imperfect Perfecto. After surrendering a fifth-inning single to Cincinnati's Dick Egan, Brown induced Hans Lobert to bump one sharply right back to him. Brown then wheeled and started a double play via shortstop Joe Tinker and first baseman Frank Chance.

**[7] Chief Bender** [212 W, 127 L; had one No-Hitter in his Hall of Fame career]; **Ira Thomas [C]** — A solitary base on balls (issued to Cleveland's Terry Turner in the fourth frame) spoiled a perfect game for Chief Bender. But, thanks to the deft response of Thomas, and keystoneer, Eddie Collins, Turner was retired in a futile attempt to steal second. So, Bender ended up with an Imperfect Perfecto.

**[8] Ed Summers** [68 W, 45 L; had one 1-hitter in his ML career]; **Boss Schmidt [C]** — Summers' Imperfect Perfecto was unusual in that five different White Sox players stood safely on first base during this game: (1) Patsy Dougherty, who led off the fifth frame with a single. (2) Chick Gandil, who was safe on a fielder's-choice, Dougherty being forced out (2-6) at second by Schmidt and Donie Bush; Gandil was subsequently caught stealing, 2-6. (3) Billy Sullivan, who walked with one down in the sixth session. (4) Ed Walsh, who was safe on a fielder's choice, Sullivan being retired on a 5-6 force-out (Chick Lathers to Bush); Walsh was subsequently caught stealing, 2-6. (5) Rollie Zeider walked in the seventh inning, but was caught stealing, 2-4 (Schmidt to Charley O'Leary).

**[9] Walter Johnson** [417 W, 279 L; had one No-Hitter in his Hall of Fame career]; **Eddie Ainsmith [C]** — While many of the Imperfect Perfectos were created by relatively mundane double plays and/or caught stealings, The Big Train picked up his first one thanks to some special fielding plays. With one out in the second stanza, Bobby Veach doubled, ending any thought of a no-hitter. The next batter, Del Gainer, was retired when he grounded to shortstop George McBride, who tossed to first sacker Chick Gandil. Veach held second until McBride threw to Gandil and then made a dash for third. But, Gandil rifled the sphere to hot corner man Frank LaPorte who tagged Veach to complete a 6-3-5 double play. In the eighth inning, Ty Cobb got a free pass to open the session and held his position as Veach fled out to left. Then Gainer grounded to Johnson, who threw to Gandil for the out, Cobb moving to the midway and taking a big turn at second, which drew a throw from Gandil to second baseman Ray Morgan, on which Tyrus bolted for the hot corner. Morgan threw to to third, but the ball hit Cobb in the back, which allowed Cobb to keep on dashing toward the plate. LaPorte recovered the ball and fired to Ainsmith, who had to reach for the peg. Cobb slid around the stretching Ainsmith, but missed the plate and was tagged out before he could scramble back to the pan — an amazing 1-3-4-5-2 double play. And, then in the ninth frame, George Moriarty led off with a single and was forced out at second by pinch hitter Hugh High. The next batter, Jean Dubuc, also a pinch hitter, on a hit-and-run play, lined the ball to left fielder Howie Shanks, who fired the ball in to McBride, who relayed it to Gandil to double up High, 7-6-3, to end the game.

**[10] Jim Scott** [107 W, 114 L; had two 1-hitters in his ML career]; **Ray Schalk [C]** — Except for the first two stanzas, Scott and his teammates were perfect, each of the batters on the Cleveland Naps from the third inning on was retired in one-two-three order. But, in the first frame, first-up batter Nemo Leibold coaxed a base on balls off Scott. However, Leibold was then eliminated in a 2-6 CS (Schalk to Buck Weaver). Then, in the second, Jackson singled and tried to swipe second; he was stifled by Schalk and Weaver. So, thanks to the two stymied base stealing attempts, Scott emerged with an Imperfect Perfecto.

**[11] Bob Harmon** [107 W, 133 L; had four 2-hitters in his ML career]; **Bobby Schang [C]** — Closely similar to Scott's Imperfect Perfecto, Harmon allowed two batters to reach first base safely: Red Killefer and Tiny Graham, both with singles, the former in the first frame and the latter in the third chapter. Each of them was subsequently caught stealing, Schang to shortstop Wally Gerber.

**[12] Dan Griner** [28 W, 55 L; had one 1-hitter in his ML career]; **Frank Snyder [C]** — Perhaps, the number-one pitching highlight of Griner's ML career was the two-hitter he hurled against the Philadelphia Phillies. While he gave up singles to Bobby Byrne (leading off the first frame) and Bud Wieser (leading off the sixth session), both of the runners were knocked off the basepath: Byrne was caught stealing, 2-6 (Snyder to Art Butler); Wieser was forced out at second by Bill Killefer, who hit into an around-the-horn 5-4-3 double play (Zinn Beck to Miller Huggins to Dots Miller). Another candidate for Griner's numero-uno pitching highlight would probably be the one-hitter he tossed against the Phillies on May 06, 1918, when he was with the Brooklyn Robins. However, in that game he also walked three men while two others reached on errors; he ended up facing 32 batters and five men were left on base.

**[13] Art Nehf** [184 W, 120 L; had three 1-hitters in his ML career]; **Bert Whaling [C]** — After having pitched two shutouts in his first three starting assignments as an ML hurler, Nehf produced what would probably be the best regular-season game of his Big League career: an Imperfect Perfecto against Brooklyn. He permitted but one solitary base runner — Otto Miller having collected a single in the sixth inning before being retired on a 5-4-3 GDP (Red Smith to Ed Fitzpatrick to Butch Schmidt) hit into by Wheezer Dell.

**[14] Eppa Rixey** 266 W, 251 L; had one 2-hitter in his Hall of Fame career]; **Bill Killefer [C]** — After retiring the first two batters, Rixey yielded a single to the Giants' Dave Robertson. But, he was promptly eliminated from the basepath when he was caught by Killefer and shortstop Dave Bancroft trying to purloin second base. Then Larry Doyle led off the second inning with a single. But, he was also quickly removed from the basepath when he was caught by Killefer and keystone Bert Niehoff attempting to steal. Bill McKechnie kept up the one-hit-per-inning attack with a leadoff single in the third. But, he was immediately retired on the front end of a 1-6-3 GDP (Rixey to Bancroft to Fred Luderus) hit into by Bill Rariden. Rixey then settled down and did not allow another base runner until the ninth inning when first batter McKechnie singled. But, once again, his time on the basepath was brief, as he was swiftly forced out at the keystone when Rariden again hit into a 1-6-3 twin killing. So, even though Rixey gave up four hits, he still managed — with the help of Killefer, Bancroft, Niehoff, and Luderus — to achieve an Imperfect Perfecto.

**[15] Jack Coombs** [158 W, 120 L; had four 1-hitters in his ML career]; **Chief Meyers [C]** — Each of the three fundamental ways of getting on base impacted Coombs's Imperfect Perfecto against the Cubs: (a) Heinie Zimmerman walked in the second inning; (b) Rollie Zeider was safe on a fielding error (a wild throw to first) by the third baseman Mike Mowrey in the fourth round; and (c) Max Flack singled in the seventh stanza. Fortunately for Coombs, Zimmerman and Flack were exterminated in their attempts to steal the keystone, the former by Meyers and shortstop Ivy Olson and the latter by Meyers and second baseman George Cutshaw. And, Mowrey atoned for his fielding error in splendid fashion by snaring a whooping liner off the bat of Les Mann and then firing to first sacker Lew McCarty to double off Zeider.

**[16] Babe Ruth** [94 W, 46 L; had one 1-hitter in his Hall of Fame career]; **Pinch Thomas [C]**; **Ernie Shore** [65 W, 43 L; had one 1-hitter in his ML career]; **Sam Agnew [C]** — In one of baseball's most celebrated games, Babe Ruth and Ernie Shore combined to hurl a no-hitter that was also an Imperfect Perfecto. After walking Washington's leadoff batter, Ray Morgan, on four pitched balls, starting hurler Ruth and umpire Brick Owens got into a shouting match which led to Ruth being ejected which so infuriated him that he charged to the plate and slugged the arbiter. After order was restored, Shore took over the mound duties and Agnew took over the backstop chores. Morgan was then thwarted trying to steal second and Shore proceeded to set down the each of the next 26 batters in perfect up-and-down order.

**[17] Bill Doak** [169 W, 157 L; had three 1-hitters in his ML career]; **Frank Snyder [C]** — Bill Doak's Imperfect Perfecto is especially interesting for a few reasons. First, four different Brooklyn batters reached first base: two via singles (Casey Stengel in the second inning and George Cutshaw in the ninth inning); one via a base on balls (Zack Wheat); and one via fielding error (Ernie Krueger, thanks to third baseman Doug Baird's fumble). Second, two of the batters got on base in the same (second) inning: Stengel (single) and Wheat (walk). Third, three different means of retiring the base runners were employed: (1) caught napping — Stengel was retired (1-3) when Doak picked him off with a throw to Gene Paulette; (2) double plays — Wheat and Cutshaw were eliminated via twin killings, the former by a 4-6-3 GDP (Dots Miller to Rogers Hornsby to Paulette) and the latter by a 5-4-3 GDP (Baird to Miller to Paulet); and (4) caught stealing — Krueger was nabbed, 2-6 (Snyder to Hornsby). Fourth, Doak also earned a complete game victory in the second game of the double header, the Cardinals defeating the Robins, 12-4. [It is noted that Brooklyn tallied a run in the first inning of the night-cap, thereby terminating Doak's string of ten consecutive perfect and/or imperfect perfecto innings. In his previous game, September 11, versus Pittsburgh, he had concluded his stint with one imperfect perfecto inning.]

**[18] Elmer Jacobs** 50 W, 81 L; had one 2-hitter in his ML career]; **Jack Adams [C]** — As Shakespeare's Hamlet said, "[Every] dog will have his day," Elmer Jacobs had his best day as a ML pitcher in the August 20, 1918, game against the St. Louis Cardinals. He gave up but two hits, a fifth-inning single to Bob Fisher and a sixth-inning single to Cliff Heathcote. Moreover, both of them were eliminated on the basepath via double plays: Fisher on a 6-4-3 GDP (Dave Bancroft to Harry Pearce to Fred Luderus) hit into by Austin McHenry, and Heathcote on a 6-3 FDP (Bancroft to Luderus). And, since Jacobs didn't walk or hit any batters and his fielders made no errors, there were no men left on base. Jacobs had faced the minimum 27 batters in hurling a complete game shutout — an Imperfect Perfecto.

**[19] Herb Pennock** [241 W, 162 L; had one 1-hitter in his Hall of Fame career]; **Wally Schang [C]** — The last Imperfect Perfecto achieved during the Deadball Era was the one hurled by Pennock. It was hardly a masterpiece as Pennock surrendered three singles (one to Happy Felsch and two to Shano Collins) and issued one base on balls (to Ray Schalk). But, thanks to a couple 2-6 caught stealings (Schang to Dave Shean) and a pair of GDPs, 1-6-3 (Pennock to Everett Scott to Stuffie McInnis) and 6-4-3 (Scott to Shean to McInnis), Pennock was able face just the minimum 27 batters.

Summary — During the 1901-1919 period eight of the Imperfect Perfectos were tossed by AL hurlers while the NL twirlers pitched eleven. Eight of the pitchers (including Babe Ruth) were subsequently elected for enshrinement in the Baseball Hall of Fame.

[B] PRE-DESIGNATED HITTER ERA

Table 2 presents the list of the 26 Imperfect Perfectos (#s 20-45) achieved during the 1920-1972 period.

**Table 2. List of Pitchers with Imperfect Perfectos in the Pre-Designated Hitter Era (1920-1972).**

#	Year	Date	Pitcher	Team	OPP	Base Runners On				Base Runners Out	
						Total	Hits	W+	SOE	CS+	DP
20	1921	9-14	Walter Johnson	WAS*	SLB	3	3	—	—	1	TP
21	1922	5-07	Jesse Barnes	NYG*	PHP	1	—	1	—	—	1

22	1925	9-09 (1)	Dazzy Vance	BRK*	PHP	1	1	—	—	1	—
23	1933	5-04	Si Johnson	CIN	BSN*	1	1	—	—	1	—
24	1940	5-30 (1)	Carl Hubbell	NYG	BRK*	1	1	—	—	—	1
25	1942	8-23 (2)	Lon Warneke	CHC*	CIN	2	2	—	—	1	1
26	1942	9-23	Larry French	BRK*	PHP	1	1	—	—	1	—
27	1945	9-02 (2)	Red Barrett	SLC*	CHC	1	1	—	—	1	—
28	1946	8-03	Orval Grove	CWS*	WAS	5	3	1	1	—	5
29	1948	8-31 (1)	Hank Borowy	CHC*	BRK	1	1	—	—	1	—
30	1950	8-19	Art Houtteman	DET*	SLB	3	1	2	—	1	2
31	1950	9-19	Frank Hiller	CHC	PHP*	2	2	—	—	1	1
32	1951	6-28	Frank Hiller	CHC	SLC*	2	1	1	—	—	2
33	1951	8-11	Max Lanier	SLC*	CIN	3	2	—	1	1	2
34	1952	5-29	Mickey McDermott	BOS*	WAS	2	1	1	—	—	2
35	1953	5-10 (1)	Bob Porterfield	WAS	PHA*	2	1	1	—	—	2
36	1955	5-10	Don Newcombe	BRK	CHC*	1	1	—	—	1	—
37	1958	6-15 (1)	Jim Wilson	CWS	BAL*	2	2	—	—	1	1
38	1960	8-18	Lew Burdette	MIL*	PHP	1	—	1	—	—	1
39	1961	4-28	Warren Spahn	MIL*	SFG	2	—	2	—	—	2
40	1962	7-02	Dick Donovan	CLE*	BAL	2	2	—	—	1	1
41	1964	6-04	Sandy Koufax	LAD	PHP*	1	—	1	—	1	—
42	1966	7-01	Woodie Fryman	PIT	NYM*	1	1	—	—	1	—
43	1966	9-21	Dick Kelley	ATL*	SLC	3	3	—	—	—	3
44	1967	5-12	Jim Palmer	BAL	NYN*	1	1	—	—	—	1
45	1969	7-06 (2)	Gary Waslewski	MON	PHP*	2	1	1	—	—	2

**[20] Walter Johnson; Val Picinich [C]** — Eight years after tossing his first Imperfect Perfecto [Number 9 above], The Big Train became the first pitcher to earn a second one, which was probably more incredible than his first one: After retiring the first nine Browns batters he faced, he gave up back-to-back singles to Jack Tobin and Frank Ellerbe to begin the fourth frame. And up to the plate came George Sisler. Gorgeous George connected for a liner over second that shortstop Donie Bush intercepted, retiring Sisler. Bush tossed to second baseman Bucky Harris who stepped on the keystone to double up Tobin, who had set sail for the hot corner, and Harris's peg to first reached the primary sacker, Joe Judge, long before Ellerbe could regain that station — a 6-4-3 LTP! Three innings later,



Tobin again led off with a single. After Ellerbe and Sisler were retired on easy flies, Tobin decided to take matters into his own hands (and legs) to purloin second. But, Johnson was one step ahead of him and tossed the ball to Bush, causing Tobin to retreat to first with Bush in pursuit; at the last moment Bush tossed to Judge who tagged Tobin out, completing a 1-6-3 pickoff/caught stealing play.

**[21] Jesse Barnes** [152 W, 150 L; had one No-Hitter in his ML career]; **Earl Smith [C]** — Just a solitary walk, issued to Cy Williams in the fifth frame, denied Barnes a perfect game. But, thanks to the 4-6-3 GDP (Johnny Rawling to Dave Bancroft to High Pockets Kelly) that Art Fletcher hit into, Barnes emerged with the combination of a No-Hitter and an Imperfect Perfecto.

**[22] Dazzy Vance** [187 W, 140 L; had one No-Hitter in his Hall of Fame career]; **Zack Taylor [C]** — Vance also hurled two one-hitters, the second one being an Imperfect Perfecto in which he gave up but one hit, a second stanza single to Philadelphia's Nelson "Chicken" Hawks, who was promptly eradicated from the basepath when he attempted steal the keystone, Taylor and Johnny Mitchell collaborating to effect the 2-6 CS. So, except for the Hawks's single, Vance would have had his first no-hitter. But, he didn't have to wait long to get his first no-hitter — he hurled it on his next start, in the first game of the double header on September 13 against the same Phillies team, but in the City of Brotherly Love. So, it can be viewed that Hawks's single preempted Vance from being the first ML pitcher to toss back-to-back no-nos, Johnny Vander Meer being the only big league hurler to have achieved that feat (in 1938). [It may also be of interest to point out that Vance did not increase his nine imperfect perfect innings streak by hurling a no-hitter — in the first inning of his no-hitter he walked the first batter before retiring the next three batters, thereby leaving a runner on base. A similar situation resulted in the game (on September 05) prior to his Imperfect Perfecto — in the ninth inning he surrendered a single to the leadoff hitter who was then left on base when Vance retired the final three batters.]

**[23] Si Johnson** [101 W, 165 L; had two 1-hitters in his ML career]; **Rollie Helmsley [C]** — Like Vance, Johnson was denied the honor of hurling a perfect game by a solitary single, smacked in the second inning by Boston's Wally Berger, who was quickly eliminated from the basepath when he was caught stealing, 2-4 (Helmsley to Jo-Jo Morrissey).

**[24] Carl Hubbell** [253 W, 154 L; had one No-Hitter in his Hall of Fame Career]; **Harry Danning [C]** — Like Si Johnson, King Carl was rebuffed in hurling a no-hitter that was converted into a one-hit Imperfect Perfecto. The Meal Ticket for the New York Giants gave up a single single to Brooklyn's Johnny Hudson in the third inning. Hubbell then proceeded to knock Hudson off the basepath by inducing the next batter, Gus Mancuso, to hit into a 1-6-3 GDP (Hubbell to Billy Jurgens to Babe Young).

**[25] Lon Warneke** [192 W, 121 L; had one No-Hitter in his ML career]; **Bob Scheffing [C]** — The pertinent details for his Imperfect Perfecto are as follows: Cincinnati's Frank McCormick doubled off Warneke with one down in second inning, but was snuffed out at the hot corner when the next batter, Gee Walker, grounded to shortstop Lennie Merullo, who tossed to third baseman Stan Hack, who tagged out McCormick. Walker was then caught stealing, 2-4 (Scheffing to Bobby Sturgis). In the fourth frame, Lonnie Frey singled, but was forced out at second when Bert Haas hit into a 6-4-3 GDP (Merullo to Sturgis to Phil Cavarretta).

**[26] Larry French** [197 W, 171 L; had one 1-hitter in his ML career]; **Mickey Owen [C]** — French took "saving the best for last" to heart: his 1-hitter was also an Imperfect Perfecto and was achieved in his final start in his final season in the Big Show: in the second inning he gave up a single to Nick Etten, who was then the first out in a 6-3 GDP (Pee Wee Reese to Dolph Camilli) that Bill Burich hit into.

**[27] Red Barrett** [69 W, 69 L; had three 1-hitters in his ML career]; **Del Rice [C]** — After beginning the 1945 campaign with the Braves (with whom he had produced a 2-1 W-L ledger) Barrett was traded to the Cardinals (with whom he turned in a 21-9 W-L record). In earning his twentieth triumph of the

season Barrett made it extra special: he threw an Imperfect Perfecto. Barrett didn't walk or hit any Cubs batters and thanks to the superb fielding of his teammates he permitted just one base runner, Chicago's Lennie Merullo, who chopped a single in the third inning. But when the next batter, Len Rice, failed to connect on a hit and run attempt, Merullo was caught stealing, 2-4, Del Rice to Emil Verban.

**[28] Orval Grove** [63 W, 73 L; had one 1-hitter in his ML career]; **Frankie Hayes [C]** — As it has turned out, Grove achieved the second-most-imperfect Imperfect Perfecto: five Senators managed to get on base, one in each of the second, fourth, seventh, eighth, and ninth innings. But each of them was kicked off the basepath by a teammate who hit into a double play. In the second, Stan Spence was safe on a fielding error by second baseman Cass Michaels, who then atoned for his miscue by starting a 4-3 twin killing (Michaels to Joe Kuhel) on a grounder hit by Cecil Travis. In the fourth, Buddy Lewis drew a base on balls, but was then exterminated in a 6-4-3 GDP (Luke Appling to Michaels to Kuhel) hit into by Jerry Priddy. In the seventh, Joe Grace singled and was retired on a 4-6-3 GDP hit into by Buddy Lewis. In the eighth, Mickey Vernon singled, but was removed via a 3-6-3 GDP hit into by Stan Spence. And, in the ninth, Gil Coan singled before being put out in a 1-6-3 GDP hit into by Jake Early.

**[29] Hank Borowy** [108 W, 82 L; had two 1-hitters in his ML career]; **Bob Scheffing [C]** — Except for a second-inning single by Brooklyn's Gene Hermanski, who was caught stealing (Scheffing to keystone Emil Verban), Borowy would have achieved a perfect game.

**[30] Art Houtteman** [87 W, 91 L; had two 1-hitters in his ML career]; **Aaron Robinson [C]** — While three Browns batters were able to get on base, none of them survived: (1) Jim Delsing singled in the second, but was caught stealing, 2-4 (Robinson to Jerry Priddy); (2) Don Lenhardt walked in the fourth, but was eliminated in a 4-6-3 GDP (Priddy to Neil Berry to Don Kolloway) hit into by Snuffy Stirnweiss; (3) Hank Arft walked in the ninth, but was exterminated in a 6-4-3 twin killing hit into by Ken Wood.

**[31] Frank Hiller** [30 W; 32 L; had one 1-hitter in his ML career]; **Carl Sawatski [C]** — In his first season (1950) with the Cubs (after having spent parts of the 1946, 1948, and 1949 campaigns with the Yankees during which he compiled a composite 5-6 W-L record) Hiller was primarily a relief hurler until late July, when he became a full-time starting pitcher. Going into the game on September 14 versus Boston at Braves Field, his W-L record was 10-4. The Braves won the game, 7-4, with Hiller absorbing the loss. In an article on the game played on September 19 versus the Phillies at Shibe Park Stan Baumgartner (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*) wrote: "When he [i.e., Hiller] pitched and was beaten by Boston a few days ago, he called one of the Braves aside. 'I'm going to tell you something that may help,' he said. 'Just as you raise your bat you give it a wiggle. It's sort of a hitch — and a pitcher can catch you off stride. If you stop you'll improve your batting.' The Boston player smiled, then said: 'You're a good guy. Now I'll tell you something. When you raise your arms above your head we can see you fix your fork ball and lay off it. Try to keep your hands close to your body and hide it.' Hiller thanked the [un-named] New Englander." Baumgartner then continued with his account of the Cubs-Phillies game: "Last night he did all his pitching without raising his arms above his head. As a result his fork ball was not detected and he completely baffled the Phillies." Without walking or hitting any batters, Hiller allowed only two men to reach base, giving up but two hits: a fifth-inning single to Jack Mayo and an eighth-inning one-baser to Granny Hamner. Neither of these base runners remained on the basepath very long: Mayo was promptly retired on a 6-4-3 GDP (Roy Smalley to Wayne Terwilliger to Preston Ward) and Hamner was caught stealing, 2-4 (Sawatski to Terwilliger). And, Hiller emerged with an Imperfect Perfecto.

**[32] Frank Hiller; Bruce Edwards [C]** — In gaining his second Imperfect Perfecto, Hiller twirled the only 1-hitter of his ML career. Although he had given a first-inning a base on balls to Cardinals leadoff batter Tommy Glaviano, who was erased in 6-3 LDP (Jack Cusick to Phil Cavarretta), Hiller had faced the minimum 12 batters through the fourth frame. But, after he had retired Wally Westlake on a flyout to begin the fifth inning, Enos Slaughter smacked a "hard-skipping grounder on a full-count fastball to the

right of shortstop Cusick and just grazed the glove of the lanky rookie infielder. 'It just tipped my fingers,' said Cusick afterward.'" Slaughter was immediately removed from the basepath when the next batter, Del Rice hit into an around-the-horn 5-4 3 GDP (Randy Jackson to Eddie Miksis to Cavarretta).

**[33] Max Lanier** [108 W, 82 L; had one 1-hitter in his ML career]; **Del Rice [C]** — After getting each of the first three Reds batters to ground out easily, Lanier's chance for a perfect game evaporated in the second inning when the first batter, Joe Adcock, reached first base on a fielding error (wild throw to first) by third baseman Billy Johnson. Adcock, however, was quickly in danger on Lanier's pickoff throw to first baseman Nippy Jones. Adcock broke for the keystone, but was turned back when Jones threw to second baseman Red Schoendienst, who returned the ball to Jones, who applied the putout tag. Lanier lost his chance for a no-hitter in the third inning when Ted Kluszewski singled. Klu was, however, subsequently retired when Willie Ramsdell hit into a 4-3 GDP. Kluszewski also singled in the sixth session and took an extra base on Wally Westlake's fumble; however, Klu was retired when he tried to go to third on Johnny Pramesa's grounder to shortstop Solly Hemus, who threw to Johnson, who tagged out Klu. Pramesa was then killed off when Ramsdell hit into another GDP, 1-6-4.

**[34] Mickey McDermott** [69 W, 69 L; had one 1-hitter in his ML career]; **Gus Niarhos [C]** — Thanks to a pair of 6-4-3 GDPs (Vern Stephens to Billy Goodman to Walt Dropo), both of the Washington runners that McDermott permitted were erased swiftly: (1) Eddie Yost, who walked to lead off the game, was first victim in the two-ply putout hit into by Mel Hoderlein; (2) Hoderlein, who singled in the fourth frame, was front-end out of the double play that Jackie Jensen hit into.

**[35] Bob Porterfield** [87 W, 97 L; had two 1-hitters in his ML career]; **Mickey Grasso [C]** — Befitting his phenomenal 22-10 W-L ledger (which earned him the honor of "AL Pitcher of the Year" by The Sporting News) Porterfield tossed two 1-hitters. In the first one (in the lid-lifter of a double-dip on May 10) Philadelphia's Eddie Joost broke up the no-no with a seventh-inning single; he was then doubled off first when Dave Philley hit a long flyball to center fielder Jim Busby, who threw to Mickey Vernon to effect the 8-3 FDP. The only other base runner Porterfield allowed was Kite Thomas, a pinch hitter, who walked in the ninth inning; he was eliminated in a 6-4-3 GDP (Pete Runnels to Wayne Terwilliger to Vernon). So, Porterfield ended up with an Imperfect Perfecto. In his second 1953 one-hitter (August 10) Jimmy Piersall singled leading off the third, but was put out on a 5-4-3 GDP hit into by Ted Lepcio. As it developed, Porterfield had another imperfect perfect game brewing through the eighth inning. But, in the ninth, he walked Piersall; so, when neither of the next two batters, Ted Williams, batting for Lepcio, and Floyd Baker, batting for Ellis Kinder, hit into a double play and Billy Goodman was retired for the final out, Piersall was left on base, thereby terminating Porterfield's chance to join Walter Johnson and Frank Hiller.

**[36] Don Newcombe** [149 W, 90 L; had two 1-hitters in his ML career]; **Roy Campanella [C]** — "Close; but no cigar (perfecto)!" Except for the fourth-inning single that Chicago's Gene Baker collected, Newcombe would have tossed a perfect no-hitter. Still, since Baker was quickly removed from the basepath on a 2-4 CS (Campanella to Jim Gilliam), Newcombe did achieve an Imperfect Perfecto.

**[37] Jim Wilson** [86 W, 89 L; had one No-Hitter in his ML career]; **Earl Battey [C]** — In his no-hitter (for the Milwaukee Braves in 1954), Wilson faced 28 batters, having twice walked Smokey Burgess who was first left on base and then caught stealing. In his 1958 Imperfect Perfecto for the White Sox (in the first game of a twin bill versus Baltimore), Wilson gave up a pair of singles, the first one to Brooks Robinson, in the second stanza, and the second one to Gus Triandos, in the fifth inning. Robinson was picked off first by Wilson on a nifty throw to first baseman Ron Jackson. Triandos was knocked off when Jim Marshall hit into a 4-6-3 GDP (Nellie Fox to Luis Aparicio to Jackson).

**[38] Lew Burdette** [203 W, 144 L; had one No-Hitter in his ML career]; **Del Crandall [C]** — In his no-hitter, Burdette and his teammates fielded flawlessly, no Phillies player being safe on an error; and

Burdette didn't walk anyone; and, of course, Burdette didn't allow anyone to get a hit. In contrast, however, Burdette got "three" hits: In the third-inning he singled; but nothing came of it. In the fifth inning Burdette hit Philadelphia's Tony Gonzalez on the shoulder; but Gonzalez was then swiftly eliminated from the basepath when Lee Walls hit into an unusual 5-3-6 twin killing (Eddie Mathews to Joe Adcock to Johnny Logan). It was a hit-and-run play and Gonzalez tried to go all the way third on Walls's high chopper to hot corner man Mathews, who fielded the ball and threw to Adcock at first to retire Walls. The 5-3 groundout had left third base unguarded. But, shortstop Logan alertly ran over to cover the vacant base and received the "return" throw from Adcock and tagged out the aggressive base runner as he was sliding into the bag. In the eighth-inning Burdette doubled, and subsequently scored the game's only run, on Billy Bruton's double. After the game, amidst all of the locker room congratulations and hubbub, Burdette's southpaw slab mate, veteran Warren Spahn, said, "The hell with your pitching. It wasn't your pitching that was so good. If it weren't for your hitting, you'd be pitching yet." And Burdette's battery mate, Crandall, chimed in, "See, you pitchers, that just shows you what will happen when I tell you [what] to throw." Asked if he was worried as his no-hitter went along in the late innings, Burdette said: "I never thought it could happen to me, so I didn't worry about it. But I was thinking about it; and I wanted it." Late in the game, Burdette had another thought: "I thought of Harvey Haddix when he pitched those 12 perfect innings against me last year, and then lost. I don't know how he could stand it, going all the way and not getting a run to win." So, while Burdette didn't end up with a perfect no-hitter, he did come away with a no-hit Imperfect Perfecto.

**[39] Warren Spahn** [363 W, 245 L; had two No-Hitters in his Hall of Fame career]; **Charlie Lau [C]** — In his first no-hitter (September 16, 1960, against the Phillies) Spahn missed hurling a perfect game only because of the two walks he issued. In his second no-hitter (April 28, 1961, against the Giants) he again missed twirling a perfect game only because of the two walks he gave up. There was, however, a big difference between the two no-nos. In the first one, both runners were left on base; in the second one, he emerged with an Imperfect Perfecto because both runners [Chuck Hiller (who received his free transportation in the fourth frame) and Willie McCovey (who got his free ticket in the fifth inning)] were eliminated from the basepath via 1-6-3 GDPs (Spahn to Roy McMillan to Joe Adcock) hit into by Harvey Kuenn and by Orlando Cepeda, respectively.

**[40] Dick Donovan** [122 W, 99 L; had three 1-hitters in his ML career]; **Johnny Romano [C]** — Whitey Herzog was the only Orioles player to get on base in Donovan's Imperfect Perfecto. Herzog singled in the fourth, but was eliminated on a 6-4-3 GDP (Woodie Held to Jerry Kindall to Tito Francona) hit into by Brooks Robinson. Herzog also singled in the seventh, but was retired via a 2-4 CS (Romano to Kindall).

**[41] Sandy Koufax** [165 W, 87 L; had four No-Hitters in his Hall of Fame career]; **Doug Camilli [C]** — In his first no-no (in 1962), Koufax issued five bases on balls and faced 30 batters. In his second no-hitter (in 1963) he gave out two free tickets and faced 28 batters. In his third no-hitter (in 1964), he walked just one man: Philadelphia's Dick Allen, who was then caught stealing, 2-4 (Camilli to Dick Tracewski), which thereby allowed Koufax to face the minimum 27 batters to achieve an Imperfect Perfecto. Koufax's fourth no-hitter (in 1965) was a bonafide perfect game.

**[42] Woodie Fryman** [141 W, 155 L; had four 1-hitters in his ML career]; **Jim Pagliaroni [C]** — In his rookie season Fryman achieved a streak of three complete-game shutouts. His first and third whitewashes were 3-hitters with batters faced totals of 29 and 32, respectively. In his second goose-egg game he flicked a 1-hitter, yielding a single to the Mets leadoff batter, Ron Hunt, who was promptly erased from the basepath on a 2-6 caught stealing (Pagliaroni to Bill Mazerowski), which afforded him an Imperfect Perfecto.

**[43] Dick Kelley** [18 W, 30 L; had one 1-hitter in his ML career]; **Joe Torre [C]** — Even though he gave up three hits, Kelley emerged with an Imperfect Perfecto because of three double plays. In the second

frame Orlando Cepeda singled and stole the keystone but was eliminated on a 4-6 LDP (Woody Woodward to Denis Menke) hit into by Tim McCarver. In the third session Charley Smith singled but was retired on a 5-4-3 GDP (Eddie Mathews to Woodward to Ty Cline) hit into by Dal Maxvill. In the ninth, Maxvill singled but was eradicated via a 6-4-3 GDP hit into by Ed Spiezio.

**[44] Jim Palmer** [268 W, 152 L; had one No-Hitter in his Hall of Fame career]; **Andy Etchebarren [C]** — After having retired the first 18 Yankees batters, Palmer lost his bid for a perfect game when Horace Clarke lined the first pitch in the seventh inning into center field. However, Clarke’s time on the basepath was brief: the very next batter, Tom Tresh, rapped sharply into a 4-6-3 GDP (Woody Held to Luis Aparicio to Boog Powell). Palmer then set down the next seven New York batters to end up with an Imperfect Perfecto as a consolation.

**[45] Gary Waslewski** [11 W, 26 L; had one 1-hitter in his ML career]; **Ron Brand [C]** — During the 1969 campaign, after having been utilized almost exclusively as a relief hurler (just one starting assignment) through Independence Day, Waslewski switched to being primarily a starting pitcher. In his first start, Waslewski turned in an amazing performance for the Expos, hurling a one-hit, one-walk masterpiece versus the Phillies. And, both runners were removed from the basepath by twin killings: (1) Rick Joseph, who singled in the fifth, was the first out of an around-the-horn 5-4-3 GDP (Coco Laboy to Gary Sutherland to Bob Bailey) hit into by Deron Johnson; (2) Deron Johnson, who walked in the eighth inning, was the first out in a 6-4-3 GDP (Bobby Wine to Sutherland to Bailey) hit into by Don Money. And, when Waslewsky set down the three ninth-inning batters in one-two-three order, he added his name to the list of pitchers with an Imperfect Perfecto.

Summary — During the 1920-1972 period eight of the Imperfect Perfectos were sired by AL hurlers while the NL twirlers claimed seventeen. Two of the flingers ended up with two Imperfect Perfectos apiece. The most-imperfect Imperfect Perfecto was the “fiver” achieved by Orval Grove. Five of the pitchers were subsequently elected for enshrinement in the Baseball Hall of Fame.

### [C] DESIGNATED HITTER ERA

Table 3 presents the list of the 18 Imperfect Perfectos (#s 46-63) achieved during the 1973-1996 period.

**Table 3. List of Pitchers with Imperfect Perfectos in the Designated Hitter Era (1973-1996).**

#	Year	Date	Pitcher	Team	OPP	Base Runners On				Base Runners Out	
						Total	Hits	W+	SOE	CS+	DP
46	1973	9-27	Reggie Cleveland	SLC*	CHC	1	1	—	—	—	1
47	1975	4-09	Bob Forsch	SLC*	MON	2	2	—	—	—	2
48	1980	5-29	Bob Welch	LAD*	ATL	1	1	—	—	—	1
49	1982	5-03	Mike Flanagan	BAL*	SEA	4	3	1	—	2	2
50	1982	7-25	John Candelaria	PIT*	ATL	4	4	—	—	1	3
51	1984	5-02	LaMarr Hoyt	CWS*	NYN	1	1	—	—	—	1

52	1985	4-26	Orel Hershiser	LAD*	SDP	2	1	1	—	2	—
53	1985	5-17	Bret Saberhagen	KCR	MIL*	2	2	—	—	—	2
54	1987	9-13	Floyd Bannister	CWS	SEA*	1	1	—	—	1	—
55	1988	6-07	Kelly Downs	SFG*	ATL	2	2	—	—	1	1
56	1988	9-17	Mike Moore	SEA*	MIL	2	2	—	—	—	2
57	1988	9-21	Bob Knepper	HOU*	ATL	2	1	1	—	2	—
58	1989	4-23	Bob Milacki	BAL*	MIN	5	3	2	—	1	4
59	1989	5-26	Todd Burns [20 BF]	OAK	NYY*	1	1	—	—	—	1
			Rick Honeycutt [1 BF]			—	—	—	—	—	—
			Eric Plunk [6]			—	—	—	—	—	—
60	1990	7-06	Jack Morris	DET*	KCR	1	1	—	—	—	1
61	1990	7-21	Tim Belcher	LAD	PIT*	2	1	1	—	1	1
62	1990	8-15	Terry Mulholland	PHP*	SFG	1	—	—	1	—	1
63	1992	9-29	Dennis Rasmussen	KCR	CAL*	1	1	—	—	1	—

**[46] Reggie Cleveland** [105 W, 106 L; had one 1-hitter in his ML career]; **Ted Simmons [C]** — In what turned out to be his fifth and last season in the National League (all with the St. Louis Cardinals), Cleveland produced his best record: a 14-10 (W-L) ledger with a 3.01 ERA. Furthermore, he saved his best game for his last game: In facing the minimum 27 Cubs batters, Cleveland permitted only one base runner, Ken Rudolph, who singled in the sixth session, but was cut down in 1-6-4 GDP (Cleveland to Mike Tyson to Tim McCarver) hit into by Burt Hooton.

**[47] Bob Forsch** [168 W, 136 L; had two No-Hitters in his ML career]; **Ted Simmons [C]** — In his first start of the new (1975) diamond season, Forsch turned in his finest performance of the year: without walking or hitting any Expos batters, he surrendered only two hits. (1) Barry Foote singled in the second stanza, but was eliminated in a 1-6-3 double play (Forsch to Ed Brinkman to Keith Hernandez) hit into by Gary Carter. (2) Tony Scott singled in the seventh session, but was extinguished in another 1-6-3 GDP. So, coupled with the Cardinals' errorless fielding, Forsch emerged with an Imperfect Perfecto.

**[48] Bob Welch** [211 W, 146 L; had three 1-hitters in his ML career]; **Joe Ferguson [C]** — A hanging curve to Atlanta's Larvell Blanks in the fourth frame resulted in a line single and the only base runner Welch and his Dodgers teammates permitted. And, since Chris Chambliss promptly hit into a 4-6-3 GDP (Davey Lopes to Bill Russell to Steve Garvey), an Imperfect Perfecto was accomplished.

**[49] Mike Flanagan** [163 W, 143 L; had one 2-hitter in his ML career]; **Rick Dempsey [C]** — Four Seattle Mariners batters reached first base safely against Flanagan: Dave Henderson (three times) and Jim Essian (once). Yet, none of them survived. (a) In the second inning, Hendu worked Flanagan for a base on balls; but he was picked off first, 1-3 (Flanagan to Eddie Murray). (b) In the third frame, Essian singled, but tried to stretch it to a double and was cut down at the keystone on a throw from centerfielder Al Bumbry to shortstop Lenn Sakata. (c) In the fifth inning, Henderson singled, but was forced out when Al Cowens hit into a 5-4-3 GDP (Cal Ripken to Rich Dauer to Murray). (d) In the eighth

session, Hendu collected his second single and Joe Simpson was brought in as a pinch runner, but he was doubled off first after right fielder Dan Ford caught Cowens' flyball and fired the ball to Murray.

**[50] John Candelaria** [177 W, 122 L; had one No-Hitter in his ML career]; **Steve Nicosia [C]** — Atlanta's batters collected four singles off Candelaria; none of them reached second base. (1) Rafael Ramirez was cut down trying to steal the keystone, 2-4 (Nicosia to Johnny Ray) in the first inning. (2) Bob Horner was erased in a 6-3 GDP (Dale Berra to Jason Thompson) hit into by Rufino Linares in the second stanza. (3) Horner was the first out of a 4-6-3 GDP hit into by Linares in the eighth frame. (4) Glenn Hubbard was snuffed out in a 6-4-3 GDP hit into by Bruce Benedict in the ninth round.

**[51] LaMarr Hoyt** [98 W, 68 L; had one 1-hitter in his ML career]; **Carlton Fisk [C]** — A single hit destroys a no-hitter, perfect or not. But, if the lone base hitter is eradicated from the basepath, the pitcher can at least take solace in having hurled a one-hit Imperfect Perfecto. For Hoyt, the lone base hitter was New York's Don Mattingly, whose seventh-inning blooper couldn't be caught on the fly and thereby became a single. But, the next batter, Steve Kemp, hit back to the box, resulting in a 1-6-3 GDP (Hoyt to Jerry Dybzinski to Mike Squires).

**[52] Orel Hershiser** [204 W, 150 L; had two 1-hitters in his ML career]; **Steve Yeager [C]** — In the first of three mano-a-mano confrontations between Hershiser and San Diego's Tony Gwynn, the Padres batter drew first blood by drawing a first-inning base on balls. But, Hershiser and Yeager responded quickly, the latter calling for a pitchout and then picking off Gwynn with a snap throw to first sacker Mike Marshall who then ran him down. In the next Hershiser-Gwynn head-to-head battle, Gwynn again prevailed with a fourth-inning single. And, again the Dodgers battery responded quickly when they got the next batter, Steve Garvey, to strike out and nailed Gwynn attempting to steal the keystone, 2-4-3 (Yeager to Bob Bailor to Marshall). For each of the remaining five frames, Hershiser and Yeager combined to thwart the Padres in one-two-three fashion, including the third and final Hershiser-Gwynn toe-to-toe encounter in which Gwynn was induced to loft a routine fly to center fielder Candy Maldonado.

**[53] Bret Saberhagen** [167 W, 117 L; had one No-Hitter in his ML career]; **Jim Sundberg [C]** — Two Milwaukee hits combined with two Kansas City double plays permitted Saberhagen to face the perfect minimum number of 27 batters: (1) Robin Yount singled in the second inning but was then retired in a 1-6-3 GDP (Saberhagen to Onix Concepcion to Steve Balboni) hit into by Ted Simmons. (2) Jim Gantner singled in the sixth inning but was retired in a 6-4-3 GDP (Concepcion to Frank White to Balboni) hit into by Ernie Riles.

**[54] Floyd Bannister** [134 W, 143 L; had one 1-hitter in his ML career]; **Carlton Fisk [C]** — "With two outs in the third, Harold Reynolds sent a liner down the left-field line [for a single] and tried to stretch it into a double. But [number-7 outfielder] Gary Redus made a great play and nailed him easily at second [on a throw to number-4 infielder Donnie Hill]." Bannister, thus, was nearly perfect; he had faced the minimum 27 batters. "Ironically, Bannister shook off Fisk just once — on Reynolds' single. 'With a 1-0 count, I thought I'd be creative and call a slider,' Fisk said. 'He shook me off and threw a fastball. I called a perfect game.'" And, Bannister got an Imperfect Perfecto.

**[55] Kelly Downs** [57 W, 53 L; had two 2-hitters in his ML career]; **Kirt Manwaring [C]** — Atlanta's Ken Oberkfell singled in the fourth frame; but he was caught stealing, 2-6 (Manwaring to Matt Williams). Dion James singled in the fifth inning; but he was forced out on a 6-4-3 GDP (Williams to Robby Thompson to Will Clark) hit into by Ozzie Virgil. That was it in terms of runners getting on base against Downs, effectively 27 batters up and 27 batters down.

**[56] Mike Moore** [161 W, 176 L; had two 1-hitters in his ML career]; **Dave Valle** and **Scott Bradley [C]** — Milwaukee's Jeffrey Leonard singled in the second stanza; but he was forced out on 3-6-3 GDP

(Alvin Davis to Mario Diaz to Davis) hit into by Greg Brock. Rob Deer singled in the fifth frame; but he was forced out on a 6-4-3 GDP (Diaz to Harold Reynolds to Davis) hit into by Brock. Since Moore didn't walk or hit any batters and the Seattle defense performed flawlessly, no other runners got on base; and no runners were left on base. Moore and his teammates earned an Imperfect Perfecto.

**[57] Bob Knepper** [146 W, 155 L; had one 1-hitter in his ML career]; **Alan Ashby [C]** — The combination was perfect: Knepper and Ashby collaborated to induce Atlanta's first three batters to make routine outs. Then, after cleanup slugger Dale Murphy beat out a slow roller to third base without a throw to first and the next batter was retired on a easy flyout, Ashby and second baseman Craig Reynolds caught Murphy attempting to steal. Knepper and Ashby then resumed their joint effort and caused the next nineteen batters to make commonplace outs, which brought up the ninth inning, with Houston leading, 1-0. Knepper walked Bruce Benedict to open the frame and Albert Hall was sent in as a pinch runner. Knepper and Ashby were equal to the task with a strike-'em-throw-'em-out twin killing, pinch hitter Ozzie Virgil fanning and Reynolds receiving Ashby's peg and tagging out the would-be base stealer. Knepper and Ashby also whiffed the next batter to complete the Imperfect Perfecto.

**[58] Bob Milacki** [39 W, 47 L; had four 3-hitters in his ML career]; **Mickey Tettleton [C]** — In spite of perfect fielding by the Orioles defense, five Twins batters reached first base. And, thanks to Baltimore's defense, each of the five Minnesota base runners was eradicated: (1) Randy Bush walked in the second stanza, but was picked off first and caught stealing, 2-6-3 (Tettleton to Cal Ripken to Randy Milligan). (2) Wally Backman singled in the fourth frame, but was retired in a 6-4-3 double play (Cal Ripken to Billy Ripken to Milligan) hit into by Kirby Puckett. (3) Gary Gaetti singled in the fifth round, but was forced out on a 2-6-3 GDP hit into by Gene Larkin. (4) Jim Dwyer singled in the sixth session, but was eliminated in a 6-3 GDP hit into by Tim Laudner. (5) Dwyer also singled to begin the ninth inning, but was again extinguished on the basepath when the next batter, John Moses, hit into a 1-6-3 GDP. Milacki then retired the last batter to earn the Imperfect Perfecto.

**[59] Todd Burns** [21 W, 23 L; had zero low-hit complete games in his ML career]; **Rick Honeycutt** 109 W, 143 L; had one 2-hitter in his ML career; **Eric Plunk** [72 W, 58 L; had zero complete games in 41 games started in his ML career]; **Ron Hassey [C]** — While primarily a starting pitcher in his rookie (1988) season, Burns was used almost-exclusively as a relief hurler in his sophomore campaign, starting just two games while relieving in 48 games. He might not have had any starts if Storm Davis had not been placed on the disabled list. Nonetheless, Burns made the most of his chance, tossing a nifty one-hitter against the Yankees, as described in the game account provided in the (New York) *Daily News*. Burns made one mistake: he threw one strike too many and got ahead 0-2 in the count to Rickey Henderson leading off the fourth. "If he's got one strike on him, or none, I'm playing up," said Oakland third baseman Carney Lansford. "I always try to take the bunt away from him up to two strikes. With two strikes, I have to play back." Lansford playing back against Henderson's speed cost Burns a chance at a no-hitter. It also saved A's manager from having to make a very difficult decision. With the count 0-2, Henderson hit a swinging bunt along the third base line that Lansford charged, scooped with an excellent bare-handed pickup, and threw in one motion. Lansford did everything perfectly, but he could not get the speedy Henderson. It turned out to be the only hit for the Yankees. Henderson was quickly obliterated when Steve Sax hit into a 6-3 GDP (Mike Gallego to Mark McGwire). The hit by Henderson made life easier for LaRussa, who had decided before the game to not overextend Burns, who was making his first start of the season and whose longest previous stint was 4 2/3 innings. "I was watching his pitches," said LaRussa, who removed Burns with two out in the seventh after he had made 82 pitches. It wasn't a difficult decision. It would have been if Lansford had been able to throw Henderson out. "If he's got a no-hitter?" LaRussa repeated the question. "He's gotta stay." After Burns retired the first two batters in the seventh, Honeycutt came in and got the next batter, Don Mattingly, to fly out to complete the session. Eric Plunk came in for the eighth and ninth frames and turned in a six-up-six-down performance, thereby earning the Burns-Honeycutt-Plunk triumvirate a combined Imperfect Perfecto.



**[60] Jack Morris** [254 W, 186 L; had one No-Hitter in his Hall of Fame career]; **Mike Heath [C]** — After Morris got Kansas City's first-up batter in the first inning on a popout, the next batter, Kurt Stillwell, hit a bouncing ball that made its way to center field for a single. According to the game account given in the *Detroit Free Press*, "Morris said he felt he might have fielded Stillwell's first-inning single if he had reacted more quickly; the ball went near his right shoulder on its way to center. Second baseman Lou Whitaker didn't miss it by much, but even if he had fielded it, the speedy Stillwell would have beaten his throw." Morris then caused George Brett to hit into a 4-6-3 GDP (Whitaker to Alan Trammell to Dave Bergman) to complete the effective "three-up-three-down" first frame. And, for the each of the next eight innings Morris executed a bonafide three-up-three-down to complete the Imperfect Perfecto.

**[61] Tim Belcher** [146 W, 140 L; had two 1-hitters in his ML career]; **Rick Dempsey [C]** — The Pirates Jay Bell got a fourth-inning single of Belcher and then was caught trying to swipe second, 2-6 (Dempsey to Jose Vizcaino). The only other Pittsburgh base runner was Mike LaValliere, who got a sixth-inning base on balls from Belcher, but was retired in a 1-6-3 GDP (Belcher to Vizcaino to Juan Samuel) hit into by Orlando Merced.

**[62] Terry Mulholland** [124 W, 142 L; had one No-Hitter in his ML career]; **Darren Daulton [C]** — Phillies third baseman Charlie Hayes allowed the only base runner the Giants managed to have in the game: Rick Parker, leading off the seventh hit a grounder to Hayes's left. Hayes made the play, but his throw to first sailed and pulled first baseman John Kruk off the bag. While Hayes's error cost Mulholland a chance for a perfect game, there was still the chance for a no-hitter. And, since Parker was exterminated on the basepath when the next batter, Dave Anderson, hit into a 6-4-3 GDP (Dickie Thon to Tommy Herr to Kruk), there also was still the chance for an Imperfect Perfecto. The status remained unchanged through the first two batters of the ninth. Gary Carter was then summoned to pinch hit for Mike Kingery. "That was an ultimate high for me," said Carter. "I tell you, I was pumped. I was going to break up that no-hitter, no matter what." Carter's at-bat yielded just what he wanted — a hard liner. But as the ball headed toward the left-field line, Charlie Hayes snared it for the final out, securing both the no-hitter and the Imperfect Perfecto for Mulholland.

**[63] Dennis Rasmussen** [91 W, 77 L; had one 1-hitter in his ML career]; **Brent Mayne [C]** — In spite of a down-and-up and here-and-there 1992 season, Rasmussen probably hurled the best game of his ML career. After finishing the 1991 campaign with the San Diego Padres with a 6-13 W-L ledger, he was granted free agency in late October. On January 31, 1992 he signed with the Baltimore Orioles, but did not appear in any games for them, playing instead with the Rochester Red Wings (Baltimore's AAA team in the International League) where he produced an uninspiring 0-7 W-L ledger before he was released on June 02. He then (on June 05) signed with the Chicago Cubs, splitting time with the Iowa Cubs (Chicago's AAA team in the American Association) and Chicago, turning in 1-1 and 0-0 W-L records, respectively, before being released on July 21. He then (on July 22) signed with the Kansas City Royals and joined their AAA Omaha Royals team (American Association) where he generated a 3-3 W-L record before being called up to the Big Show where he produced a 4-1 W-L ledger, highlighted by a near no-hitter against the Angels: The only hit, indeed the only base runner, Rasmussen allowed was a fourth-inning single by Damion Easley on a 1-1 fastball that got up. Easley's time on the basepath was brief: he was quickly erased in a 1-3-6 pickoff/caught stealing play (Rasmussen to Wally Joyner to Curt Wilkerson). Upon retiring the last 17 Angels batters Rasmussen achieved an Imperfect Perfecto.

Summary — During the 1973-1996 period the AL and NL each garnered nine Imperfect Perfectos. None of the pitchers achieved more than one Imperfect Perfecto. The most-imperfect Imperfect Perfecto was the "fiver" achieved by Bob Milacki. Only one of the Imperfect Perfectos was

simultaneously a no-hitter. Only one of the pitchers was subsequently elected for enshrinement in the Baseball Hall of Fame.

### INTER-LEAGUE PLAY ERA

Table 4 presents the list of the 19 Imperfect Perfectos (#s 64-82) achieved during the 1997-2019 period.

**Table 4. List of Pitchers with Imperfect Perfectos in the Inter-League Play Era (1997-2019).**

#	Year	Date	Pitcher	Team	OPP	Base Runners On				Base Runners Out	
						Total	Hits	W+	SOE	CS+	DP
64	1997	9-02	Mike Grace	PHP*	NYN	3	3	—	—	1	2
65	2001	5-24	Jon Lieber	CHC*	CIN	2	1	1	—	—	2
66	2001	9-05	Woody Williams	SLC	SDP*	2	2	—	—	1	1
67	2002	4-26	Odalis Perez	LAD	CHC*	1	1	—	—	—	1
68	2003	6-17	Jae Weong Seo [20 BF]	NYM	FLA*	1	1	—	—	1	—
			David Weathers [4 BF]			—	—	—	—	—	—
			Armando Benitez [3 BF]			—	—	—	—	—	—
69	2004	7-21	Mark Buehrle	CWS	CLE*	2	2	—	—	—	2
70	2006	6-30	Josh Fogg	COL	SEA*	3	2	1	—	—	3
71	2007	4-18	Mark Buehrle	CWS*	TEX	1	—	1	—	1	—
72	2007	7-07	Erik Bedard	BAL	TEX*	2	2	—	—	—	2
73	2008	9-11	Roy Oswalt	HOU*	PIT	3	3	—	—	—	3
74	2010	7-26	Matt Garza	TBR*	DET	1	—	1	—	—	1
75	2011	5-07	Justin Verlander	DET	TOR*	1	—	1	—	—	1
76	2013	4-19	Wandy Rodriguez [21 BF]	PIT*	ATL	1	—	—	—	1	—
			Mark Melancon [3 BF]			—	—	—	—	—	—
			Vin Mazzaro [3 BF]			1	—	—	—	1	—
77	2013	9-16	Andrew Cashner	SDP	PIT*	1	1	—	—	—	1
78	2014	5-29	Josh Collmenter	ARZ*	CIN	3	3	—	—	3	—
79	2015	5-23	Mike Bolsinger [24 BF]	LAD*	SDP	1	1	—	—	1	—
			Kenley Jansen [3 BF]			—	—	—	—	—	—
80	2017	6-03	Edinson Volquez	MIA*	ARZ	2	—	2	—	—	2

81	2018	3-20	Johnny Cueto [21 BF] Tony Watson [3 BF] Hunter Strickland [3 BF]	SFG	LAD*	1	1	—	—	—	1
						—	—	—	—	—	—
						—	—	—	—	—	—
82	2019	9-20	Mike Fiers [24 BF] Chris Bassitt [3 BF]	OAK*	TEX	2	2	—	—	1	1
						—	—	—	—	—	—

**[64] Mike Grace** [16 W, 16 L; had one 3-hitter in his ML career]; **Mike Lieberthal [C]** — Three hits by the Yankees batsmen were not sufficient impediments to prevent Grace from achieving an Imperfect Perfecto: (1) Derek Jeter singled in the fourth inning, but was subsequently caught stealing, 2-6 (Lieberthal to Kevin Stocker). (2) Paul O'Neill singled in the eighth inning, but was erased in a 4-6-3 GDP (Mickey Morandini to Stocker to Rico Brogna) hit into by Chad Curtis. (3) Charlie Hayes singled in the ninth inning, but was forced in a 6-4-3 GDP hit into by Joe Girardi.

**[65] Jon Lieber** [131 W, 124 L; had one 1-hitter in his ML career]; **Todd Hundley [C]** — Cincinnati's Juan Castro was the only player to get on base against Lieber; and, he accomplished that twice. But, Lieber got the last laugh, as Castro was obliterated both times: (1) After singling in the sixth session (a soft liner to right field on a slider that was up, a mistake pitch), Scott Winchester forced Castro while hitting into a 1-6-3 GDP (Lieber to Rickey Gutierrez to Julio Zuleta). (2) After walking in the ninth inning, Ruben Rivera forced Castro while hitting into a 4-6-3 GDP (Eric Young to Gutierrez to Zuleta).

**[66] Woody Williams** [132 W, 116 L; had one 2-hitter in his ML career]; **Eli Marrero [C]** — Facing his former Padres teammates for the first time since his trade to the Cardinals a month earlier, Williams set them down one-two-three over the first six innings, 18 batters up and 18 batters out. Then, leading off the seventh, on the very first pitch, D'Angelo Jimenez lofted a flyball into the left-center gap that fell in for single; trying to stretch the hit into a double, he was thrown out by 10 feet by center fielder Jim Edmonds. Williams then continued with his batter-up-batter-out rhythm through the eighth frame. Then, opening the ninth Ben Davis singled; but, after Tony Gwynn, pinch hitting for Damian Jackson, flied out to J.D. Drew on the warning track in right field and Rickey Henderson had been inserted as a pinch runner for Davis, Wiki Gonzalez, pinch hitting for Wascar Serrano, hit into a 3-6-3 GDP (Albert Pujols to Edgar Renteria to Pujols).

**[67] Odalis Perez** [73 W, 82 L; had two 1-hitters in his ML career]; **Paul Lo Duca [C]** — After setting down each of the Cubs batters in one-two-three order through the first six stanzas, a bad-hop infield single interrupted Perez's keep-'em-off-base performance: Corey Patterson hit a grounder up the middle; shortstop Cesar Izturis was there, but the ball took a bad hop into his chest. Izturis was able to cradle the ball, but his throw to first was not in time to catch the speedy Patterson. However, the next batter, Chris Stynes, followed with another ball to Izturis which he converted into a 6-4-3 GDP (Izturis to Mark Grudzielanek to Eric Karros). Perez then resumed his keep-'em-off-base regimen for the remainder of the game.

**[68] Jae Weong Seo** [28 W, 40 L; had one complete game in 102 games started in his ML career]; **David Weathers** [73 W, 88 L; had zero complete games in 69 games started in his ML career]; **Armando Benitez** [40 W, 47 L; had zero games started in his ML career]; **Jason Phillips [C]** — On Sunday, June 15, 2003, the Mets pitcher Steve Trachsel shut out the Angels in Anaheim on a one-hitter; he also walked four batters and ended up facing a 30 batters. Then, on Monday, June 16, the Marlins pitcher Dontrelle Willis shut out the Mets in Florida on a one-hitter; he issued one base on balls and ended it up facing 29 batters. And, on Tuesday, June 17, Seo and relievers Weathers and Benitez combined to whitewash the Marlins: Seo, faced 20 batters, 19 of them being retired directly from the batters box and one who first got on base — Juan Encarnacion singled off the left field wall in the fifth, but was subsequently eliminated via a 2-4 CS (Phillips to Roberto Alomar). Then, with two out in the

seventh, after throwing a strike to Ivan Rodriguez, Seo motioned to the Mets dugout. Manager Art Howe went to the mound to look at the split nail on Seo's right index finger. He was taken out and Weathers came in to finish the inning, retiring Rodriguez on an infield groundout; he also shut down the Marlins in the eighth in one-two-three style. Then, in the ninth, Benitez came in to wrap up the game and did so appropriately, in one-two-three format. So, the Seo-Weathers-Benitez threesome combined for a sparkling Imperfect Perfecto.

**[69] Mark Buehrle** [214 W, 160 L; had two No-Hitters in his ML career]; **Jamie Burke [C]** — For the first 19 straight Cleveland hitters Buehrle was perfect. Then Omar Vizquel hit a 3-2 pitch into center field to end the perfect-game bid. But, the bid for an Imperfect Perfecto continued a moment later when Matt Lawton hit into a 3-6-1 GDP (Paul Konerko to Jose Valentin to Buehrle). The Imperfect Perfecto was again challenged in the eighth inning when Tim Laker led off with a single to center. But, after the next batter was struck out looking, the challenge was met when Travis Hafner hit into a 5-4-3 GDP (Juan Uribe to Willie Harris to Konerko). And the Imperfect Perfecto was then solidified with a perfect one-two-three ninth.

**[70] Josh Fogg** [62 W, 69 L; had one 2-hitter in his ML career]; **Yorvit Torrealba [C]** — Three times a Seattle Mariners batter got on base; and each time that was followed by a “two-outs-for-the-price-of-one” play to exterminate the base runner: (1) Adrian Beltre singled in the first and was forced out on a 4-6-3 GDP (Jamey Carroll to Clint Barmes to Todd Helton) hit into by Jose Lopez. (2) Raul Ibanez walked in the fifth and was forced out on a 5-4-3 GDP (Garrett Atkins to Carroll to Helton) hit into by Richie Sexson. (3) Kenji Johjima singled in the sixth and was forced out on a 3-6-3 GDP hit into by Jeremy Reed.

**[71] Mark Buehrle; A.J. Pierzynski [C]** — Akin to the Preacher Roe strategy for pitching to Stan Musial — *“I throw him four wide ones then try to pick him off first base.”* — Buehrle passed Texas's Sammy Sosa in the fifth inning and then successfully picked him off with a quick throw to first baseman Paul Konerko. Since that base on balls was the only instance of a runner getting on base against Buehrle, he walked away with a no-hitter and his second Imperfect Perfecto.

**[72] Erik Bedard** [71 W, 82 L; had one 2-hitter in his ML career]; **Ramon Hernandez [C]** — A couple of singles combined with follow-up GDPs afforded Bedard an Imperfect Perfecto at the expense of the Texas Rangers: (1) Desi Relaford singled in the first inning and was forced out on a 6-3 GDP (Brandon Fahey to Aubrey Huff) hit into by Michael Young. (2) Sammy Sosa singled in the eighth session and was forced out on a 6-4-3 GDP (Fahey to Brian Roberts to Huff) hit into by Marlon Byrd.

**[73] Roy Oswalt** [163 W, 102 L; had two 1-hitters in his ML career]; **Brad Ausmus [C]** — While he surrendered three hits to the Pittsburgh batters, Oswalt and his infield forced each of them off the bases: (1) Luis Rivas singled in the first, but was exterminated by a 1-6-3 GDP (Oswalt to Miguel Tejada to Lance Berkman) hit into by Ryan Doumit. (2) Doug Mientkiewicz singled in the eighth, but was eradicated by a 6-4-3 GDP (Tejada to Mark Loretta to Berkman) hit into by Steve Pearce. (3) Luis Cruz singled in the ninth, but was eliminated by another 1-6-3 GDP.

**[74] Matt Garza** [93 W, 106 L; had one No-Hitter in his ML career]; **Kelly Shoppach [C]** — A solitary walk, in the second inning to Brennan Boesch, gave Detroit its only base runner against Garza, permanently preventing pitching perfection. Fortunately, for Garza, Boesch was expelled from the basepath via an around-the-horn 5-4-3 GDP (Evan Longoria to Reid Brignac to Carlos Pena) hit into by Ryan Raburn, which allowed Garza to embellish his no-hitter with an Imperfect Perfecto.

**[75] Justin Verlander** [225 W, 129 L; has three No-Hitters in his ML career]; **Alex Avila [C]** — Cruising along through the first seven and one-third innings, Verlander had not allowed a single Toronto batter to reach base, 22 batters up, 22 batters out. However, the 23rd batter, J.P. Arencibia proved problematic:

in a twelve-pitch plate appearance Verlander walked him. But, the next batter, Edwin Encarnacion, then hit into a 6-4-3 GDP (Jhonny Peralta to Scott Sizemore to Miguel Cabrera). And, Verlander then proceeded to vanquish each of the Blue Jays batters in one-two-three fashion in the ninth to secure the second no-hitter — and the first Imperfect Perfecto — of his ML career. Incidentally, in his first no-hitter (in 2007) Verlander waded four Brewers and faced a total of 30 batters; he wasn't close to an Imperfect Perfecto. In his third no-no (in 2019), Verlander faced 28 Blue Jays batters, having walked just one man — Cavan Biggio, with one out in the first frame; and the next batter, Vladimer Guerrero Jr., hit a grounder to third. But, while an around-the-horn 5-4-3 GDP was theoretically possible, the ball was not hit sharply and third baseman Abraham Toro had to charge the ball, his only play being a throw to first that beat Guerrero by a couple of steps, Biggio easily moving to second on the play. And, when Verlander struck out the next batter, Justin Smoak, Biggio was left on base, terminating the chance for Verlander's second Imperfect Perfecto.

**[76] Wandy Rodriguez** [97 W, 98 L; had one 4-hitter in his ML career]; **Mark Melancon** [28 W, 26 L; has had zero games started in his ML career]; **Vin Mazzaro** [24 W, 23 L; has had 0 complete games in 45 games started in his ML career]; **Russell Martin [C]** — With three perfect innings to start the game, no Braves player had reached base until Jason Heyward singled with one out in the fourth. But, when Justin Upton hit into a 6-4-3 GDP (John McDonald to Neil Walker to Garrett Jones), at least the Imperfect Perfecto was on track. Rodriguez then resumed his perfect pitching for the fifth, sixth, and seventh frames. With the Pirates holding a relatively comfortable lead, 6-0, Rodriguez was then replaced on the mound by Melancon, who hurled a perfect one-two-three eighth inning, after which he turned the slab responsibilities over to Mazzaro for the ninth inning. Andrelton Simmons led off the last-ditch frame with a single, putting the Imperfect Perfecto in jeopardy. But, Gerald Laird then hit into a 3-6-1 GDP to restore the required "no-runners-left-on-base" requirement. And, when Mazzaro struck out the next batter, Ramiro Pena, to end the game, the Imperfect Perfecto was secure.

**[77] Andrew Cashner** [57 W, 87 L; has two 1-hitters in his ML career]; **Rene Rivera [C]** — Except for a solitary single off the bat of Jose Tabat leading off the seventh stanza, Cashner was perfect. And, because Tabat was eliminated from the basepath on a 6-4-3 GDP (Ronny Cedeno to Jedd Gyorko to Tommy Medica) hit into by Andrew McCutchin, Cashner ended up with an Imperfect Perfecto.

**[78] Josh Collmenter** [38 W, 35 L; had one 3-hitter in his ML career]; **Tuffy Gosewisch [C]** — While giving up a double and two singles, Collmenter did not walk or hit any Reds batters and thus still managed to come away with an Imperfect Perfecto. Brayan Pena was the principal thorn in Collmenter's side, smashing a two-bagger in the third, but being nailed at third base when he attempted to advance there after center fielder A.J. Pollock caught Zack Cozart's flyball, Pollock's perfect throw to hot corner man Martin Prado completing the 8-5 FDP. Pena also smacked a sixth-inning single off Collmenter, but was erased on a 5-4-3 GDP (Prado to Aaron Hill to Paul Goldschmidt) hit into by Cozart. Billy Hamilton collected the other hit off Collmenter, a fourth-inning single. But, he was forced out on a 4-6-3 GDP (Hill to Chris Owings to Goldschmidt) hit into by Todd Frazier.

**[79] Mike Bolsinger** [8 W, 19 L; has zero complete games in 41 games started in his ML career]; **Kenley Jansen** [30 W, 21 L; has zero games started in his ML career]; **A.J. Ellis [C]** — The Padres first batter, Yangervis Solarte, ended the no-hitter with a single on Bolsinger's fourth pitch of the game. But, the next batter, Cory Spangenberg, hit into a 4-6-3 GDP (Howie Kendrick to Jimmy Rollins to Adrian Gonzalez) to keep the Imperfect Perfecto alive. Bolsinger then set down the next 22 batters in perfect order before turning the mound over to closer Kenley Jansen, who tossed a perfect ninth.

**[80] Edinson Volquez** [93 W, 88 L; has one No-Hitter in his ML career]; **J.T. Realmoto [C]** — Except for the two bases on balls he issued to Jake Lamb (in the fifth inning) and Chris Hermann (in the eighth inning), Volquez hurled a perfect game. Fortunately, for Volquez, Arizona's Brandon Drury hit into a pair

of twin killings to eradicate the base runners: (1) a 6-3 GDP (J.T. Riddle to Justin Bour); (2) a 5-4-3 GDP (Derek Dietrich to Dee Gordon to Bour).

**[81] Johnny Cueto** [126 W, 87 L; had one 1-hitter in his ML career]; **Tony Watson** [39 W, 25 L; has zero games started in his ML career]; **Hunter Strickland** [16 W, 15 L; has zero games started in his ML career]; **Buster Posey [C]** — In the Opening Day game of the 2018 season between the host Dodgers and the guest Giants, a contingent of five San Francisco hurlers combined to shut out Los Angeles, 1-0, although they gave up six hits and issued five walks; they faced a total of 36 batters. In the second game of the season, the Giants again shut out the Dodgers, 1-0; but with much greater efficiency: (a) only three pitchers were utilized; (b) only one hit was given up; (c) no walks were issued; (d) only 27 batters were faced. Cueto, Watson, and Strickland collaborated to hurl an Imperfect Perfecto. The only Dodgers base runner was Chris Taylor, who singled off Cueto in the seventh, but was eliminated in a 4-6-3 GDP (Joe Panik to Brandon Crawford to Brandon Belt) hit into by Corey Seager.

**[82] Mike Fiers** [69 W, 59 L; has two No-Hitters in his ML career]; **Chris Bassitt** [14 W, 19 L; has zero complete games in 55 games started in his ML career]; **Sean Murphy [C]** — A first-inning single by the Texas leadoff hitter, Shin-Soo Choo, immediately ended any hope for a third no-hitter for Fiers. But, the next batter, Delino DeShields, hit into a 6-4-3 GDP (Marcus Semien to Sheldon Neuse to Matt Olson), which kept alive the chance for an Imperfect Perfecto. Then in the third, DeShields singled with one down. But, he was then picked off first on a nifty throw from Fiers to Olson, keeping the chance for an Imperfect Perfecto intact. From that point on, it was lights-out perfect pitching by Fiers through the eighth inning. And, in the ninth, Chris Bassitt came on and hurled a perfect one-two-three frame, cementing the Imperfect Perfecto.

Summary — During the 1997-2019 period the NL claimed 13 Imperfect Perfectos while the AL managed to get only 6. Only one of the pitchers achieved two Imperfect Perfectos. The most-imperfect Imperfect Perfectos were the three with three base runners each. Four of the Imperfect Perfectos were simultaneously no-hitters.

## DISCUSSION

In the Results section the 82 Imperfect Perfectos were presented in chronological order. However, as shown in the Results section, there are several degrees of imperfection for the Imperfect Perfecto based on the number of players who got on base (one, two, three, four, or five) and how they got on base (via one of the three fundamental ways pointed out previously). So, how about ordering them according to prestigiousness? One approach to achieve such a ranking would be to order the Imperfect Perfectos according to the number of imperfections, the lower the number of imperfections, the higher the ranking: (1) No-Hitter, with only one base runner; (2) No-Hitter with only two base runners; (3) One-Hitter with only one base runner; (4) One-Hitter with only two base runners; (5) etc., etc. Tables 5 through 16 rank each of the 75 *single-pitcher complete-game* Imperfect Perfectos identified in the research carried out for this report. Thus, the Imperfect Perfectos engineered by multiple-pitcher combinations (such as those produced by Ruth/Shore and Fiers/Bassitt) are not included in Tables 5-16.

Table 5 lists the nine pitchers who hurled a no-hit Imperfect Perfecto with only one base runner. These nine hurlers are tied for first place (grouped A through I). For Mulholland's Imperfect Perfecto it may be argued that it should stand alone in first place since the player who became the only base runner did so as a consequence of a fielding error — not as the result of a the player's batting proficiency (i.e., getting a base hit) or the pitcher's inadequacy, (i.e., issuing a base on balls or by hitting a batter with a pitched ball). It is pointed out that three of the Table 5 pitchers — Cy Young, Sandy Koufax, and Mark Buehrle — did hurl a true-blue perfect game during their ML careers.

**Table 5. Pitchers Who Tossed a No-Hit Imperfect Perfecto With Only One Base Runner**

#	Year	Date	Pitcher	Catcher	Team	OPP	H	W+	SOE
1-A	1908	6-30	Cy Young	Lou Criger	BOS	NYH*	—	1	—
1-B	1910	5-12	Chief Bender	Ira Thomas	PHA*	CLE	—	1	—
1-C	1922	5-07	Jesse Barnes	Earl Smith	NYG*	PHP	—	1	—
1-D	1960	8-18	Lew Burdette	Del Crandall	MIL*	PHP	—	1	—
1-E	1964	6-04	Sandy Koufax	Doug Camilli	LAD	PHP*	—	1	—
1-F	1990	8-15	Terry Mulholland	Darren Daulton	PHP*	SFG	—	—	1
1-G	2007	4-18	Mark Buehrle	A.J. Pierzynski	CWS*	TEX	—	1	—
1-H	2010	7-26	Matt Garza	Kelly Shoppach	TBR*	DET	—	1	—
1-I	2011	5-07	Justin Verander	Alex Avila	DET	TOR*	—	1	—

Next in line with rankings 10-A and 10-B (Table 6) are the two pitchers who each threw no-hit Imperfect Perfectos while allowing only two base runners. It is mentioned that in addition to his no-hit Imperfect Perfecto, Spahn tossed one other no-no in his ML career. There were no no-hit Imperfect Perfectos with more than two base runners during the 1901-2019 period.

**Table 6. Pitchers Who Tossed a No-Hit Imperfect Perfecto With Only Two Base Runners**

#	Year	Date	Pitcher	Catcher	Team	OPP	H	W+	SOE
10-A	1961	4-28	Warren Spahn	Charlie Lau	MIL*	SFG	—	2	—
10-B	2017	6-03	Edinson Volquez	J.T. Realmoto	MIA*	ARZ	—	2	—

Moving on to one-hit Imperfect Perfectos with only one base runner, Table 7 shows that there were twenty players who tied for 12th place (A through T). While denied a no-hitter with their Imperfect Perfecto, four of the Table 7 pitchers did manage to succeed in throwing a no-hitter at another time in their careers — Dazzy Vance (1 walk, 29 batters faced), Carl Hubbell (1 walk, 30 batters faced), Jim Palmer (6 walks, 35 batters faced), and Jack Morris (6 walks, 32 batters faced).

**Table 7. Pitchers Who Tossed a One-Hit Imperfect Perfecto With Only One Base Runner**

#	Year	Date	Pitcher	Catcher	Team	OPP	H	W+	SOE
12-A	1904	9-24 (1)	Bob Wicker	Johnny Kling	CHC	BRK*	1	—	—
12-B	1909	9-14	Mordecai Brown	Jimmy Archer	CHC	CIN*	1	—	—
12-C	1915	9-04	Art Nehf	Bert Whaling	BSN*	BRK	1	—	—
12-D	1925	9-08 (1)	Dazzy Vance	Zack Taylor	BRK*	PHP	1	—	—

12-E	1933	5-04	Si Johnson	Rollie Helmsley	CIN	BSN*	1	—	—
12-F	1940	5-30 (1)	Carl Hubbell	Harry Danning	NYG	BRK*	1	—	—
12-G	1942	9-23	Larry French	Mickey Owen	BRK*	PHP	1	—	—
12-H	1945	9-02 (2)	Red Barrett	Del Rice	SLC*	CHC	1	—	—
12-I	1948	8-31 (1)	Hank Borowy	Bob Scheffing	CHC*	BRK	1	—	—
12-J	1955	5-10	Don Newcombe	Roy Campanella	BRK	CHC*	1	—	—
12-K	1966	7-01	Woodie Fryman	Jim Pagliaroni	PIT	NYM*	1	—	—
12-L	1967	5-12	Jim Palmer	Andy Etchebarren	BAL	NYN*	1	—	—
12-M	1973	9-27	Reggie Cleveland	Ted Simmons	SLC*	CHC	1	—	—
12-N	1980	5-29	Bob Welch	Joe Ferguson	LAD*	ATL	1	—	—
12-O	1984	5-02	LaMarr Hoyt	Carlton Fisk	CWS*	NYN	1	—	—
12-P	1987	9-13	Floyd Bannister	Carlton Fisk	CWS	SEA*	1	—	—
12-Q	1990	7-06	Jack Morris	Mike Heath	DET*	KCR	1	—	—
12-R	1992	9-29	Dennis Rasmussen	Brent Mayne	KCR	CAL*	1	—	—
12-S	2002	4-26	Odalis Perez	Paul Lo Duca	LAD	CHC*	1	—	—
12-T	2013	9-16	Andrew Cashner	Rene Rivera	SDP	PIT*	1	—	—

Table 8 presents the list of those pitchers who tossed a one-hit Imperfect Perfecto while permitting two base runners. Each of the nine pitchers allowed one hit and issued one walk, thereby tying for 32nd place (grouped A through I). None of the Table 8 pitchers tossed a no-hitter in their ML careers.

**Table 8. Pitchers Who Tossed a One-Hit Imperfect Perfecto With Only Two Base Runners**

#	Year	Date	Pitcher	Catcher	Team	OPP	H	W+	SOE
32-A	1914	6-04	Jim Scott	Ray Schalk	CWS*	CLE	1	1	—
32-B	1951	6-28	Frank Hiller	Bruce Edwards	CHC	SLC*	1	1	—
32-C	1952	5-29	Mickey McDermott	Gus Niarhos	BOS*	WAS	1	1	—
32-D	1953	5-10 (1)	Bob Porterfield	Mickey Grasso	WAS	PHA*	1	1	—
32-E	1969	7-06 (2)	Gary Waslewski	Ron Brand	MON	PHP*	1	1	—
32-F	1985	4-26	Orel Hershiser	Steve Yeager	LAD*	SDP	1	1	—
32-G	1988	9-21	Bob Knepper	Alan Ashby	HOU*	ATL	1	1	—
32-H	1990	7-21	Tim Belcher	Rick Dempsey	LAD	PIT*	1	1	—
32-I	2001	5-24	Jon Lieber	Todd Hundley	CHC*	CIN	1	1	—

As shown in Table 9, there were three pitchers who each twirled a one-hit Imperfect Perfecto and permitted three base runners, thereby tying for 41st place. It may be contended that Coombs's gem



should be ranked alone at number-41 since one of his three base runners got on base via a fielding error. There were no Imperfect Perfecto pitchers who threw a one-hitter and allowed more than three base runners.

**Table 9. Pitchers Who Tossed a One-Hit Imperfect Perfecto With Three Base Runners**

#	Year	Date	Pitcher	Catcher	Team	OPP	H	W+	SOE
41-A	1910	7-29	Ed Summers	Boss Schmidt	DET	CWS*	1	2	—
41-B	1916	8-20	Jack Coombs	Chief Meyers	BRK	CHC*	1	1	1
41-C	1950	8-19	Art Houtteman	Aaron Robinson	DET*	SLB	1	2	—

Next, considering pitchers with two-hit Imperfect Perfectos, it is seen in Table 10 that 16 pitchers tied for 44th place (A through P) by giving up just two hits and not allowing any other base runners. Two of the Table 10 hurlers are included in previous tables: Mark Buehrle (Table 5) and Frank Hiller (Table 8). They are two of the three pitchers with a pair of Imperfect Perfectos, Walter Johnson (Tables 11 and 13, below) being the other one. Table 10 pitchers who were fortunate to hurl a no-hitter at some other time in their careers include Lon Warneke (1 walk, 28 batters faced), Jim Wilson (2 walks, 28 batters faced), Bob Forsch (two no-hitters, the first one with 2 walks and 29 batters faced, the second one with 1 hit batsman and 29 batters faced), and Bret Saberhagen (2 walks and 30 batters faced).

**Table 10. Pitchers Who Tossed a Two-Hit Imperfect Perfecto With Only Two Base Runners**

#	Year	Date	Pitcher	Catcher	Team	OPP	H	W+	SOE
44-A	1902	7-01	Rube Waddell	Ossie Schreckengost	PHA*	BAL	2	—	—
44-B	1906	10-01 (1)	Carl Lundgren	Pat Moran	CHC	PHP*	2	—	—
44-C	1914	10-03	Bob Harmon	Bobby Schang	PIT*	CIN	2	—	—
44-D	1915	5-19	Dan Griner	Frank Snyder	SLC	PHP*	2	—	—
44-E	1918	8-20	Elmer Jacobs	Jack Adams	PHP	SLC*	2	—	—
44-F	1942	8-23 (2)	Lon Warneke	Bob Scheffing	CHC*	CIN	2	—	—
44-G	1950	9-19	Frank Hiller	Carl Sawatski	CHC	PHP*	2	—	—
44-H	1958	6-15 (1)	Jim Wilson	Earl Battey	CWS	BAL*	2	—	—
44-I	1962	7-02	Dick Donovan	Johnny Romano	CLE*	BAL	2	—	—
44-J	1975	4-09	Bob Forsch	Ted Simmons	SLC*	MON	2	—	—
44-K	1985	5-17	Bret Saberhagen	Jim Sundberg	KCR	MIL*	2	—	—
44-L	1988	6-07	Kelly Downs	Kirt Manwaring	SFG*	ATL	2	—	—
44-M	1988	9-17	Mike Moore	Dave Valley Scott Bradley	SEA*	MIL	2	—	—
44-N	2001	9-05	Woody Williams	Eli Marrero	SLC	SDP*	2	—	—

44-O	2004	7-21	Mark Buehrle	Jamie Burke	CWS	CLE*	2	—	—
44-P	2007	7-07	Erik Bedard	Ramon Hernandez	BAL	TEX*	2	—	—

Table 11 shows that there were three pitchers who tossed a two-hit Imperfect Perfecto and allowed one base runner in addition to the two who got on via hits. These three hurlers tied for 60th place (A through C). For Lanier, the other base runner got on base via a fielding error. Walter Johnson was the only Table 11 pitcher to spin a no-hitter at some other time in his Big League career.

**Table 11. Pitchers Who Tossed a Two-Hit Imperfect Perfecto With Three Base Runners**

#	Year	Date	Pitcher	Catcher	Team	OPP	H	W+	SOE
60-A	1913	6-10	Walter Johnson	Eddie Ainsmith	WAS*	DET	2	1	—
60-B	1951	8-11	Max Lanier	Del Rice	SLC*	CIN	2	—	1
60-C	2006	6-30	Josh Fogg	Yorvit Torrealba	COL	SEA*	2	1	—

Bill Doak, as shown in Table 12, was the only pitcher to throw a two-hit Imperfect Perfecto with four base runners, although one of them got on base via a fielding error. Doak's game currently sits in 63rd place.

**Table 12. Pitchers Who Tossed a Two-Hit Imperfect Perfecto With Four Base Runners**

#	Year	Date	Pitcher	Catcher	Team	OPP	H	W+	SOE
63	1917	9-18 (1)	Bill Doak	Frank Snyder	SLC*	BRK	2	1	1

Continuing with the rank-ordering of the single-pitcher Imperfect Perfectos, Table 13 reveals that six pitchers tied for 64th place (A through F) by throwing a three-hit Imperfect Perfecto, each of the base hitters being the only base runners.

**Table 13. Pitchers Who Tossed a Three-Hit Imperfect Perfecto With Three Base Runners**

#	Year	Date	Pitcher	Catcher	Team	OPP	H	W+	SOE
64-A	1906	5-17	Sam Leever	George Gibson	PIT*	NYG	3	—	—
64-B	1921	9-14	Walter Johnson	Val Picinich	WAS*	SLB	3	—	—
64-C	1966	9-21	Dick Kelley	Joe Torre	ATL*	SLC	3	—	—
64-D	1997	9-02	Mike Grace	Mike Lieberthal	PHP*	NYG	3	—	—
64-E	2008	9-11	Roy Oswalt	Brad Ausmus	HOU*	PIT	3	—	—
64-F	2014	5-29	Josh Collmenter	Tuffy Gosewisch	ARZ*	CIN	3	—	—

Table 14 shows that two pitchers threw three-hit Imperfect Perfectos and also put a fourth runner on by issuing a base on balls; they tied for 70th place.

**Table 14. Pitchers Who Tossed a Three-Hit Imperfect Perfecto With Four Base Runners**

#	Year	Date	Pitcher	Catcher	Team	OPP	H	W+	SOE
70-A	1919	6-12	Herb Pennock	Wally Schang	BOS*	CWS	3	1	—
70-B	1982	5-03	Mike Flanagan	Rick Dempsey	BAL*	SEA	3	1	—

The most-imperfect Imperfect Perfectos, in terms of most base runners, are the two hurled by Orval Grove and Bob Milacki — each gave up three hits and allowed a total of five base runners, although one of Grove’s base runners got on thanks to a fielding error. As shown in Table 15, Grove and Milacki tied for 72d place.

**Table 15. Pitchers Who Tossed a Three-Hit Imperfect Perfecto With Five Base Runners**

#	Year	Date	Pitcher	Catcher	Team	OPP	H	W+	SOE
72-A	1946	8-03	Orval Grove	Frankie Hayes	CWS*	WAS	3	1	1
72-B	1989	4-23	Bob Milacki	Mickey Tettleton	BAL*	MIN	3	2	—

The most-imperfect Imperfect Perfectos, in terms of most hits allowed, are the four-hitters tossed by Eppa Rixey and John Candelaria. Since neither hurler walked or hit any batters and no players got on base via fielding errors, Rixey and Candelaria allowed only the four base hitters to get on base. As shown in Table 16, they tied for 74th place.

**Table 16. Pitchers Who Tossed a Four-Hit Imperfect Perfecto With Four Base Runners**

#	Year	Date	Pitcher	Catcher	Team	OPP	H	W+	SOE
74-A	1916	6-29	Eppa Rixey	Bill Killefer	PHP	NYG*	4	—	—
74-B	1982	7-25	John Candelaria	Steve Nicosia	PIT*	ATL	4	—	—

Considering Tables 15 and 16, an argument can be made that the most-imperfect Perfectos, regardless of the number of hits, should come down to the most base runners allowed. From that perspective, Grove and Milacki would occupy the last positions (tied for 74th).

Having ranked the Imperfect Perfectos among themselves, the next logical question is, “Where do they rank in prestigiousness among other games?” Well, in my opinion, the perfect game is unquestionably the highest single-game achievement for any pitcher — 27 batters up, 27 batters out. There have been a total of 23 perfect games in major league history; 21 of them have been since 1901, including the arguably most-famous perfect game of all time — Don Larsen’s perfecto in the 1956 World Series. Table 17 presents the chronological list of the 21 pitchers who tossed a perfecto during the 1901-2019 period.

**Table 17. Major League Pitchers Who Tossed a Perfecto (1901-2019).**

Year	Date	Pitcher	Catcher	Team	OPP	H	W+	SOE
1904	5-05	Cy Young	Lou Criger	BOS*	PHA	—	—	—
1908	10-02	Addie Joss	Nig Clarke	CLE*	CWS	—	—	—
1922	4-30	Charlie Robertson	Ray Schalk	CWS	DET*	—	—	—
1956	10-08	Don Larsen	Yogi Berra	NYY*	BRK	—	—	—
1964	6-21	Jim Bunning	Gus Triandos	PHP	NYM*	—	—	—
1965	9-09	Sandy Koufax	Jeff Torborg	LAD*	CHC	—	—	—
1968	5-08	Jim Hunter	Jim Pagliaroni	OAK*	MIN	—	—	—
1981	5-15	Len Barker	Ron Hassey	CLE*	TOR	—	—	—
1984	9-30	Mike Witt	Bob Boone	CAL	TEX*	—	—	—
1988	9-16	Tom Browning	Jeff Reed	CIN*	LAD	—	—	—
1991	7-28	Dennis Martinez	Ron Hassey	MON	LAD*	—	—	—
1994	7-26	Kenny Rogers	Ivan Rodriguez	TEX*	CAL	—	—	—
1998	5-17	David Wells	Jorge Posada	NYY*	MIN	—	—	—
1999	7-18	David Cone	Joe Girardi	NYY*	MON	—	—	—
2004	5-18	Randy Johnson	Robby Hammock	ARZ	ATL*	—	—	—
2009	7-23	Mark Buehrle	Ramon Castro	CWS*	TBR	—	—	—
2010	5-09	Dallas Braden	Landon Powell	OAK*	TBR	—	—	—
2010	5-29	Roy Halladay	Carlos Ruiz	PHP	FLA*	—	—	—
2012	4-21	Phil Humber	A.J. Pierzynski	CWS	SEA*	—	—	—
2012	6-13	Matt Cain	Buster Posey	SFG*	HOU	—	—	—
2012	8-15	Felix Hernandez	John Jaso	SEA*	TBR	—	—	—

Since “27 batters up, 27 batters out” is the definition of a (nine inning) perfect game, the next best single-game pitching performance, in my opinion, is “27 batters up, 27 batters out — with one or more of the batters retired *after* getting on base” — i.e., the Imperfect Perfecto. Thus, there probably would be little, if any, disagreement with the no-hit Imperfect Perfectos listed in Table 5 (and perhaps also Table 6) being regarded as the most prestigious games *after* the 21 perfect games (Table 17).

However, when one considers the Imperfect Perfectos in which the pitcher allowed one or more hits, ranking games relative to no-hitters is not so straightforward. Which is more highly esteemed? — a one-hit Imperfect Perfecto with only one base runner, such as the one hurled by Dennis Rasmussen on September 29, 1992, or a no-hitter with several base runners, such as the 8 batters Nolan Ryan passed in his third career no-no on September 28, 1974; or, A.J. Burnett’s no-hitter on May 12, 2001 — the Marlins hurler walked nine Padres and also hit a batter! Or, Jim Maloney’s first no-hitter on August 19,

1965 (first game) — a 10-inning no-no against the Cubs in which the Reds flinger faced a total of 40 batters, 11 of whom reached base via a walk or by being hit by a pitched ball. Trying to rank-order a one-hit Imperfect Perfecto and a No-Hitter depends on an individual's perspective — much like the classic proverb “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder” or the “Less Filling! Tastes Great!” Bud Lite beer commercial. Nonetheless, it is fully appreciated that while a no-hitter *is* a no-hitter (irrespective of the number of walks), an Imperfect Perfecto with one or more hits is *not* a no-hitter. So, rather than “open a can of worms,” I’ll refrain from any further comparisons of Imperfect Perfectos and no-hitters.

## **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

A total of 82 Imperfect Perfectos were identified in this research effort; 75 were accomplished in single-pitcher complete-game performances. Three pitchers each achieved two Imperfect Perfectos — Walter Johnson, Frank Hiller, and Mark Buehrle. Three of the Imperfect Perfecto hurlers also threw a bonafide Perfecto — Cy Young, Sandy Koufax, and Mark Buehrle. Thus, Buehrle is the only ML pitcher (at least from from the 1901-2019 period) to have tossed three 27-batter shutouts. Several of the Imperfect Perfecto pitchers also tossed no-hitters — in addition to each of the architects of the no-hit Imperfect Perfectos listed in Tables 5 and 6, there are: (from Table 8) Dazzy Vance, Carl Hubbell, Jim Palmer, and Jack Morris; (from Table 10) Lon Warneke, Jim Wilson, Bob Forsch (2), and Bret Saberhagen; and (from Table 16) John Candelaria. It is also noted that Mike Fiers, who collaborated with Chris Bassitt on currently the most recent Imperfect Perfecto, has two complete game no-hitters listed on his ML resume.

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