

# A Second Look At The Triple Plays

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This analysis updates my original paper published on *SABR.org* and *Retrosheet.org* and my Triple Plays sub-website at SABR. The origin of the extensive triple play database<sup>1</sup> from which this analysis stems is the SABR Triple Play Project co-chaired by myself and Frank Hamilton with the assistance of dozens of SABR researchers<sup>2</sup>.

Using the original triple play database and updating/validating each play, I used event files and box scores from *Retrosheet*<sup>3</sup> to build a current database containing all of the recorded plays in which three outs were made (1876-2019). In this updated data set 719 triple plays (TP) were identified. [See complete list/table elsewhere on *Retrosheet.org* under FEATURES and then under NOTEWORTHY EVENTS].

The 719 triple plays covered one-hundred-forty-four seasons. 1890 was the *Year of the Triple Play* that saw nineteen of them turned. There were none in 1961 and in 1974. On average the number of TP's is 4.9 per year. The number of TP's each year were:

## Total Triple Plays Each Year (all Leagues)

Year	TP's	Year	TP's	Year	TP's	Year	TP's	Year	TP's	Year	TP's
<1876		1900	1	1925	7	1950	5	1975	1	2000	5
1876	3	1901	8	1926	9	1951	4	1976	3	2001	2
1877	3	1902	6	1927	9	1952	3	1977	6	2002	6
1878	2	1903	7	1928	2	1953	5	1978	6	2003	2
1879	2	1904	1	1929	11	1954	5	1979	11	2004	3
1880	4	1905	8	1930	7	1955	7	1980	5	2005	1
1881	3	1906	4	1931	8	1956	2	1981	5	2006	5
1882	10	1907	3	1932	3	1957	4	1982	4	2007	4
1883	2	1908	7	1933	2	1958	4	1983	5	2008	2
1884	10	1909	4	1934	5	1959	2	1984	1	2009	5
1885	9	1910	10	1935	5	1960	2	1985	2	2010	4
1886	9	1911	7	1936	9	1961	0	1986	5	2011	4
1887	9	1912	3	1937	4	1962	2	1987	2	2012	3
1888	5	1913	5	1938	2	1963	3	1988	4	2013	1
1889	5	1914	10	1939	4	1964	6	1989	5	2014	6
1890	19	1915	9	1940	3	1965	8	1990	4	2015	4
1891	9	1916	4	1941	1	1966	6	1991	7	2016	7
1892	2	1917	5	1942	3	1967	6	1992	5	2017	7
1893	6	1918	4	1943	1	1968	7	1993	4	2018	2
1894	6	1919	8	1944	9	1969	6	1994	2	2019	3
1895	5	1920	7	1945	1	1970	3	1995	3	2020	
1896	5	1921	10	1946	5	1971	5	1996	5		
1897	5	1922	9	1947	5	1972	6	1997	4		
1898	3	1923	9	1948	7	1973	4	1998	4		
1899	6	1924	11	1949	7	1974	0	1999	4		
										<b>Total</b>	<b>719</b>

The distribution of these 719 TPs can be broken down in several ways, such as by decade, by month, by home vs. visiting team, by league, by team, by ballpark, by inning, by position, by scores, by individual players involved batting-running and fielders and in any number of ways. The database is that extensive. The following tables are just some of the ways that the data can be parsed and displayed.

### Triple Plays In Each Decade

Decade	TP's
1870s	10
1880s	66
1890s	66
1900s	49

Decade	TP's
1910s	65
1920s	84
1930s	49
1940s	42

Decade	TP's
1950s	41
1960s	46
1970s	45
1980s	38

Decade	TP's
1990s	42
2000s	35
2010s	41
<b>Total</b>	<b>720</b>

The average across the fifteen decades is around 47.9 with the roaring 1920's having 84 TP's. In the 144 seasons the most number of years seems to have 5 TP's as is shown on the following chart.

### Number of Years With Triple Plays

# TP's	# Years	Tot TP's
0	2	0
1	9	9
2	18	36
3	17	51
4	22	88
5	25	125
6	13	78
7	13	91
8	5	40
9	11	99
10	5	50
11	3	33
19	1	19
<b>Tot</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>719</b>

It really didn't matter what month it was, but the home team turned more than the visitors.

### Triple Plays Each Month

Month	TP Turned By		
	Hm	Vis	Total
APR	40	39	79
MAY	76	60	136
JUN	60	59	119
JUL	67	57	124
AUG	68	57	125
SEP	71	50	121
OCT	7	8	15
<b>Tot</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>719</b>

The following table shows that the home team turned 389 and the visitors made 330 of the total. When the home team turned their TP's they were winning 139 times, losing 144 times and tied 92 times. The visitors were ahead 144 times, losing 114 times, and tied 72 times. That meant that the team that turned the triple plays was ahead 39% of the time; were losing 38% of the time and tied 23% of the time. That is a fairly balanced distribution.

### Fielding Team Scores At Time Of TP

Fielding Team Score At Time of TP			
	Home	Away	Total
Winning	139	144	283
Tied	92	72	164
Losing	158	114	272
unk	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>719</b>

### The Distribution by Inning

Inning	Home	Visitor	#TP's	% of Tot
1	36	41	77	0.107
2	50	44	94	0.131
3	32	44	76	0.106
4	55	40	95	0.132
5	39	36	75	0.104
6	42	39	81	0.113
7	51	29	80	0.111
8	39	35	74	0.103
9	38	20	58	0.081
10	2	0	2	0.003
11	2	2	4	0.006
12	1	0	1	0.001
13				
14	2	0	2	0.003
<b>Total</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>1.000</b>

The following table is a breakdown of the 2,132 players who handled the ball and the 1,487 different players at each position who were involved in the 719 TPs. The following table shows the breakdown by the position that originated the play, how many times total they were in on the play and how many different players there were at the position.

**Position Players Involved in the Triple Plays**

Position	Started	In On	Diff Players
<b>Pitcher</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>Catcher</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>150</b>
<b>1st Base</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>357</b>
<b>2nd Base</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>313</b>
<b>3rd Base</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>230</b>
<b>Shortstop</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>270</b>
<b>Left Field</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Center Field</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Right Field</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>2132</b>	<b>1487</b>

[\* There were 114 players involved at more than one position - 1,373 different players in all.]

All nine positions have been involved in the TP's by putting the batter/runner out or by assisting another player. The below table shows which putouts and which assists were credited to what position. There was an average of 2.07 assists per triple play.

Position	Putouts				Assists					PO+A	
	PO1	PO2	PO3	PO Tot	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5+		A Tot
Pitcher	49	2	8	59	73	5	3	4	2	87	146
Catcher	49	27	91	167	33	52	17	7	2	111	278
1st Base	100	198	343	641	88	87	77	6	1	259	900
2nd Base	157	244	86	487	135	222	24	7	4	392	879
3rd Base	152	70	57	279	159	59	21	13	3	255	534
Shortstop	141	176	129	446	144	133	25	7	4	313	759
Left Field	24	0	2	26	23	2	0	0	0	25	51
Center Field	25	2	3	30	27	1	0	0	0	28	58
Right Field	22	0	0	22	22	0	0	0	0	22	44
none					15	158	552	675	702	2102	2102
unk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>2157</b>	<b>704</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1493</b>	<b>3650</b>

There were 34 game-ending triple plays. Thirty-three of them were turned in the 9th inning and one was turned in the 14th. Two of the “End-Of-Game” TPs were an Unassisted Triple Play. Two started with a strikeout. Five had the bases loaded and 19 had runners on 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>. Visitors had 13 of them and the home team had 21. The Philadelphia Phillies had the most game-ending triple plays with 4.

Nineteen times the TP started with a strikeout. The other 700 started with a batted ball of the type: (a) Fly Ball 79 times, (b) Ground ball 214 times, (c) Line Drive 349 times, (d) Pop-ups 56 times and 2 unknown ball types. 123 times the line drive putout was immediately followed by a doubling-up second putout by the same fielder. Fourteen of these line drive putouts #1 followed-up by a second putout by the same fielder resulted in an **Unassisted Triple Play**. Of the 700 that didn’t start with a strikeout, 572 began with a putout and 128 started with an assist.

### Batted Ball Type

Ball Type	Cnt	1st & 2nd Putouts Same Fielder
Line Drive	349	123
Ground Ball	214	2
Fly Ball	79	6
Popup	56	4
Strike Out	19	0
unk	2	0
Total	719	135

In the 719 triple plays there were 240 different players involved combinations. Some of these combinations took place more often (i.e. *Around-The-Horn* 5-4-3). The below table identifies the 14 most common position combinations.

### Most Frequent Triple Play Position Combinations

PLAY SEQUENCE OCCURENCES			
Positions	Cnt	Positions	Cnt
5*-4*-3*	95	1*-6*-3*	16
6*-4*-3*	56	6-4*-3*-2*	14
4*-6*-3*	44	5*-5*-3*	10
3*-3*-6*	39	5-4*-3*-2*	10
6*-6*-3*	27	1*-3*-6*	9
4*-3*-6*	18	3*-6*-3*	9
4*-4*-3*	17	6*-6*-6*	8

Five times a triple play involve all four infielders (3-4-5-6) and no other fielders. Thirteen times an outfielder caught a fly ball and threw home to peg the runner trying to score (LF 5, CF 5, and RF 3). Only once did a cornerman make a putout and then throw across the diamond for the other cornerman to make another out and back across the diamond for the third out (5-3-5). One game (on 8/29/1969 Atlanta Braves vs. Chicago Cubs), saw seven different players handling the ball, which is an all-time record. Another game (5/16/1913 Philadelphia Athletics at Cleveland Indians) saw ten players (6 different guys) handle the ball.

There were 165 Players who were involved in fielding three or more TP's. Donie Bush and Bid McPhee head the list with nine each. 271 players help turn 2 TPs and 937 were involved in only one TP.

Fielders Turned	Cnt
Donie Bush	9
Bid McPhee	9
Jake Beckley	8
John Morrill	8
Germany Smith	8
Jim Bottomley	7
Roger Connor	7
Iron Davis	7
Gary Gaetti	7
Bill Phillips	7
George Sisler	7
Tommy Tucker	7

Fifteen<sup>4</sup> **Unassisted Triple Plays** were turned (14 in the regular season and 1 in the *World Series*), of the 719 triple plays studied, by the following players:

Date	Inn	Fielder	Pos	Fld	FLg	HA	Bat	BLg
7/19/1909	2	Neal Ball	SS	CLE	AL	vs	BOS	AL
10/10/1920	5	Bill Wambsganss	2B	CLE	AL	vs	BRO	NL
9/14/1923	2	George Burns	1B	BOS	AL	vs	CLE	AL
10/6/1923	4	Ernie Padgett	SS	BSN	NL	vs	PHI	NL
5/7/1925	9	Glenn Wright	SS	PIT	NL	vs	SLN	NL
5/30/1927	4	Jimmy E Cooney	SS	CHN	NL	at	PIT	NL
5/31/1927	9	Johnny Neun	1B	DET	AL	vs	CLE	AL
7/30/1968	1	Ron Hansen	SS	WS2	AL	at	CLE	AL
9/20/1992	6	Mickey Morandini	2B	PHI	NL	at	PIT	NL

7/8/1994	6	John Valentin	SS	BOS	AL	vs	SEA	AL
5/29/2000	6	Randy Velarde	2B	OAK	AL	at	NYA	AL
8/10/2003	5	Rafael Furcal	SS	ATL	NL	at	SLN	NL
4/29/2007	7	Troy Tulowitzki	SS	COL	NL	vs	ATL	NL
5/12/2008	5	Asdrubal Cabrera	2B	CLE	AL	vs	TOR	AL
8/23/2009	9	Eric Bruntlett	2B	PHI	NL	at	NYN	NL

There were 617 different pitchers who benefited from the TPs. Mickey Welch benefited the most with five. In second place was Will White with four. Ten pitchers benefitted three times.

Pitcher	Cnt
Mickey Welch	5
Will White	4
Tommy Bond	3
Red Ehret	3
Bill Faul	3
Pud Galvin	3
Silver King	3
Joe McGinnity	3
Bob Miller	3
George Mullin	3
Bill Sherdel	3
Chris Short	3

The St. Louis Cardinals turned the most with forty-five. The Cincinnati Reds were stung forty-six times. The National League pulled off 371 and the American League did it 295 times; the American Association had 40, the Players' League had 6; the Union Association had 1 and the Federal League had 6. There were two inter-league triple plays recorded: (1) the 1887 World Series St. Louis Browns (AA) against the Detroit Wolverines (NL); and (2) the 1920 Cleveland Indians (AL) against the Brooklyn Dodgers (NL).

The "modern" clubs (1901-2019), excluding the Federal League 6 TP's, turned 570 TP's (N.L. = 275 and A.L. = 295 plus 1 in the World Series) the teams that turned these TP's and were stung by a TP were:

#### Teams (1901-2019) Turned & Stung By Triple Plays

FFrID	Team (Franchise)	Turned	Stung
ARI	Arizona Diamondbacks	2	1
ATL	Atlanta-Milwaukee-Boston Braves	23	28

BAL	Baltimore Orioles-St. Louis Browns	38	34
BOS	Boston Red Sox	31	34
CHC	Chicago Cubs-Orphans-Colts	29	31
CHW	Chicago White Sox	34	21
CIN	Cincinnati Reds	25	36
CLE	Cleveland Indians-Naps-Blues	32	27
COL	Colorado Rockies	4	3
DET	Detroit Tigers	34	28
HOU	Houston Astros-colt .45s	10	10
KCR	Kansas City Royals	6	6
ANA	Los Angeles-Anaheim-California Angels	6	11
LAD	Los Angeles-Brooklyn Dodgers	18	29
FLA	Miami-Florida Marlins	1	5
MIL	Milwaukee Brewers	8	3
MIN	Minnesota Twins-Washington Senators	34	33
NYM	New York Mets	11	10
NYG	New York Yankees	27	29
OAK	Oakland-Kansas City-Philadelphia A's	21	34
PHI	Philadelphia Phillies-Quakers	31	29
PIT	Pittsburgh Pirates-Alleghenys	34	27
SDP	San Diego Padres	8	15
SFG	San Francisco-New York Giants	27	27
SEA	Seattle Mariners	12	9
STL	St. Louis Cardinals-Browns	35	25
TBA	Tampa Bay Rays-Devil Rays	3	3
TEX	Texas Rangers-Washington Senators	9	9
TOR	Toronto Blue Jays	4	9
WAS	Washington Nationals	12	3
	<b>TOTAL 1901-2019 AL &amp; NL</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>569</b>
	<b>WORLD SERIES 1920</b>		
	Cleveland Indians AL	1	0
	Brooklyn Dodgers NL	0	1

The Minnesota Twins were the only team to have made two triple plays in the same game, which they accomplished in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> innings on 7/17/1990 against the Boston Red Sox.

Eleven teams turned three triple plays in the same season, but only the Boston Red Sox did it twice (1924 and 1979). The shortest period of time between turning triple plays (other than the Twins game) was done by the Expos in 1993 who pulled off a pair just six days apart (8/23/1993 and 8/29/1993). The shortest time between being a victim of a triple play belongs to the Angels who were stung just six days apart (5/10/1979 and

5/16/1979). Two triple plays were executed on consecutive days (4/21/1978 and 4/22/1978) by the Astros and then the Blue Jays. The Baltimore Orioles hold the record for turning and then being stung in the shortest period of time (five days apart 8/25/1992 and 8/30/1992). The Houston Astros turned a TP against the Atlanta Braves on their last matchup in 1990 and again on their first pairing in 1991.

There were 241 different team match-ups in the 719 triple plays. The Pirates stung the Braves nine times to hold the *team vs. team* record. Four teams stung the same team eight times each (White Sox v. Red Sox; Tigers v. Red Sox; and Indians v. Orioles; and Twins v. Yankees).

Turned	Stung	Count
Pittsburgh Pirates	Atlanta-Milwaukee-Boston Braves	9
Chicago White Sox	Boston Red Sox	8
Cleveland Indians	Baltimore Orioles- St. Louis Browns	8
Detroit Tigers	Boston Red Sox	8
Minnesota Twins - Washington Senators	New York Yankees	8
Chicago Cubs	Los Angeles-Brooklyn Dodgers	7
Philadelphia Phillies	Pittsburgh Pirates	7
St. Louis Cardinals	Philadelphia Phillies	7
Baltimore Orioles- St. Louis Browns	Oakland-Kansas City-Philadelphia A's	7
New York Yankees	Minnesota Twins - Washington Senators	7
New York Yankees	Oakland-Kansas City-Philadelphia A's	7

To flip the coin over, there were 1,619 different batters/runners involved in at least one triple play. Stuffy McInnis was caught (out) eight times. Two others were caught/out 7 times each (Joe Start and Steve Brodie). Brooks Robinson batted into a triple play four times to lead in that category. George Sisler, Joe Start, Arthur Irwin, and Deacon McGuire batted into a TP three times each for second place. Overall, 710 batters were putout and 9 were not. Of the 1,569 base runners, 1,448 were retired. The breakdown by runner for each base follows.

	Batter	Runr on 1st	Runr on 2nd	Runr on 3rd	unk	Total
1st Out	500	70	107	41	1	719
2nd Out	90	249	308	71	1	719
3rd Out	119	325	205	69	1	719
Not Out	9	38	26	34	1	108
Scored	0	0	0	23		23
Not On		36	72	481		589
unk	1	1	1	1		4
Tot Involved	719	683	647	239	4	2292

The 719 men-on-base situations were predominately when there were runners on first and second and third base open. In that case both runners and the batter were put out. The below table illustrates the fact that with just two men on base, the batter and both runners were out. When the bases were loaded (130 times) only 9 times all runners were put out because the batter was part of the putout equation (batter out 121 times).

Men On	Nbr	All Caught
1-2	480	480
1-3	72	72
2-3	36	36
1-2-3	130	9
unk	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>598</b>

Runners can be put out in a variety of ways (batted ball out, forced, doubled-off, tagged, etc.). Among the triple plays there were 17 unusual instances where three outs were recorded by **Tagging Out All Runners**.

Fielder Applying Each Tag				
Fielder	1st Tag	2nd Tag	3rd Tag	Total
Pitcher	0	0	2	2
Catcher	5	2	2	9
1st Base	1	3	3	7
2nd Base	1	8	2	11
3rd Base	7	2	2	11
Shortstop	3	2	5	10
Left Fielder	0	0	1	1
Center Fielder	0	0	0	0
Right Fielder	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	

There were 505 players who were involved in both sides of a triple play (turning and being stung). Joe Start leads the pack with 12 (turning 5 and stung 7 - put out on base). However, Bid McPhee leads the pack of being the fielder and runner 20 times (turning 9 and being on base 11 times, not necessarily being put out though).

Turned	Turned	Stung	Tot		Turned	Turned	Stung	Tot
Joe Start	5	7	12		Roger Connor	7	2	9
Bid McPhee	9	2	11		Tommy Tucker	7	2	9

Jake Beckley	8	3	11	Joe Judge	5	4	9
Jim Bottomley	7	4	11	Gary Gaetti	7	1	8
George Sisler	7	4	11	Bill Phillips	7	1	8
Stuffy McInnis	4	7	11	Eddie Collins	6	2	8
Donie Bush	9	1	10	Fred Pfeffer	6	2	8
John Morrill	8	2	10	Bill Wambsganss	6	2	8
Jack Burdock	5	5	10	Tommy Corcoran	4	4	8
Ezra Sutton	5	5	10	Rogers Hornsby	4	4	8
Germany Smith	8	1	9	Tom Daly	3	5	8

One player had the honor of batting into a triple play AND executing an Unassisted Triple Play. Ron Hansen was the batter on 8/1/1965 (DET SS) 4<sup>th</sup> inning vs. the Chicago White Sox with two men on (1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>). His Unassisted Triple Play was with the Washington Senators 3 years later on 7/30/1968 against the Cleveland Indians.

Boston's catcher Scott Hatteberg lined into a triple play (8/6/2001) in the 4<sup>th</sup> inning versus the Texas Rangers, but made up for it with a grand slam in the sixth inning. Another batter, Seattle's Ron Wright, in his ONLY major-league career in a 4/4/2002 game against the Rangers had three at-bats consisting of: a strikeout, hitting into a triple play, and hitting into a double play, perhaps the worst ever major league career.

Twenty-three teams that got stung by a triple play scored on that play when their runner on third came home. The St. Louis Cardinals did it three times, while Baltimore, Boston and Cincinnati did it twice.

Date	Fld Team	HA	Bat Team	Scoring Runner
7/12/1884	St. Louis Browns	vs	Brooklyn Atlantics	Charlie Jones
5/8/1886	Pittsburgh Pirates	vs	Cincinnati Red Stockings	Hick Carpenter
6/30/1887	Cleveland Blues	vs	Cincinnati Red Stockings	Elmer Smith
6/11/1891	New York Giants	vs	Pittsburgh Pirates	Al Maul
5/29/1897	New York Giants	vs	St. Louis Cardinals	Ed McFarland
5/22/1901	Brooklyn Superbas	vs	St. Louis Cardinals	Pete Childs
6/26/1902	New York Giants	at	Philadelphia Phillies	Roy Thomas
7/16/1906	Brooklyn Superbas	at	Cincinnati Reds	Charley Hall
6/7/1908	Detroit Tigers	vs	Boston Red Sox	Gavvy Cravath
5/1/1914	Chicago Cubs	vs	St. Louis Cardinals	Dots Miller
5/25/1919	Chicago White Sox	vs	Washington Senators	Joe Judge
6/2/1919	Cleveland Indians	vs	St. Louis Browns	George Sisler
8/30/1921	Boston Braves	vs	Cincinnati Reds	Sam Bohne
9/12/1922	Chicago White Sox	vs	Cleveland Indians	Charlie Jamieson
6/28/1924	St. Louis Browns	at	Chicago White Sox	Ray French
4/30/1937	Pittsburgh Pirates	vs	Chicago Cubs	Frank Demaree
5/20/1944	Chicago White Sox	at	Boston Red Sox	Leon Culberson

6/23/1954	Boston Red Sox	at	Baltimore Orioles	Dick Kryhoski
9/10/1964	Washington Senators	vs	Baltimore Orioles	Jerry Adair
6/13/1973	Montreal Expos	vs	San Diego Padres	Dwain Anderson
6/3/1977	Baltimore Orioles	at	Kansas City Royals	Al Cowens
5/27/2006	Minnesota Twins	vs	Seattle Mariners	Richie Sexson
7/25/2017	Cincinnati Reds	at	New York Yankees	Matt Holliday

Over forty triple plays involved an umpire decision. More than a couple dozen happened in the 19<sup>th</sup> century where confusion about the rules and some sort of fielder trickery were involved. In the modern era (1901-2019) there were just over a dozen such umpire decisions. The majority were “appeal” types of decisions some of which concerned legal catch or not. However, three triple plays involved “trickery” on the part of the defense.

- Yankees vs. Athletics 4/26/1937 Tony Lazzeri (2B) **purposely dropped** a line drive to force the runners to move, nabbing the runner from first, the batter and then tagging out the runner from second.
- White Sox vs Indians 4/30/1929 involved a **hidden ball trick** when after nabbing the batter at first and catching the runner from second in a run down between third and home, the 3B Willie Kamm hid the ball in his glove waiting for the runner from first (Charlie Jamieson) who had reached third during the previous run down was caught off base, feeling secure that the plays were over.
- Reds vs Cardinals 9/6/1931 involved a **hidden ball trick** when after an easy fly the batter was out. Then the left fielder threw home to nab the runner from third (Jim Bottomley) making it two outs. The catcher threw to the shortstop (Leo Durocher) but not in time to nab the runner at second from first (Chick Hafey). Durocher hid the ball effectively and when Hafey came off the bag, thinking the play was over, Durocher threw the ball to second baseman Tony Cuccinello who tagged Hafey out.

Nice and clean and swift triple plays are the norm, but one stands out as the most persistent effort by a fielding team. The Philadelphia Athletics playing at the Cleveland Indians on 5/16/1913 involved 7 different players, with the ball changing hands 10 times and resulting in an “All Tag” triple play. The play sequence (\* denotes the putout) was SS-C-3B-P-3B\*-4\*-5-6-5-7\*. Only the CF and RF were not involved.

The triple play database is NOT COMPLETE. The current number of 719 TPs could still grow once more information is available from the early past (1876-1918) to uncover more TPs. Additionally, there are a many TPs for which we do not have complete information<sup>5</sup>. Also there are two which have not been verified, but single newspaper sources state that a TP was made<sup>6</sup>.

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Data Source:

<sup>1</sup> Each of the 719 triple play events contains 128 data fields, 42 of which were formulated in the style from *Retrosheet.org*'s event files.

<sup>2</sup> Thanks to all of the SABR researchers who worked on the *Triple Play Project*: David Arcidiacono, Priscilla Astifan, David Ball, Cliff Blau, Sam Clements, John Delahanty, Steve Gietschier, Joe Haardt, Frank Hamilton, Kevin Harlow, Ed Hartig, Richard Hershberger, Troy Kirk, John Lewis, Don Luce, Mike Lynch, Bob McConnell, Wayne McElreavy, Bill Nowlin, Jacom Pomrenke, Bob Richardson, Chuck Rosciam, John Schwartz, Ron Selter, Stew Thornley, Richard Topp, Frank Vaccaro, Jim Weigand

<sup>3</sup> Thanks to SABR Member, David Smith who has provided me millions of event records over the years and without whom this study could not have been accomplished. Also thanks to SABR Member Tom Ruane whose 1999 analysis of triple plays initiated my research.

<sup>4</sup> A 16<sup>th</sup> UTP originally recorded (Paul Hines, CF PRO vs. BSN 8<sup>th</sup> inning on 5/8/1878) technically could not happen since the runner from 2<sup>nd</sup> was not forced at 3<sup>rd</sup> base, necessitating a throw over to 2<sup>nd</sup> base to double-off the runner.

<sup>5</sup> One triple play has the barest of information: 6/15/1887 New York Metropolitan (AA) vs Louisville Colonels (AA) needs batter, runner, fielder identifications and outs clarified.

<sup>6</sup> Two possible triple plays need to be confirmed with newspaper sources: (1) 10/10/1889 Louisville Colonels [AA] vs St. Louis Browns [AA] and (2) 4/22/1892 Pittsburgh Pirates [NL] vs St. Louis Browns [NL].