

and Thomas Jefferson, who are looking down on us today, will know that we have picked up the torch because we are, after all, the children of Thomas Jefferson. We will not give up our rights, and we will fight for this democratic process.

I would invite all of my colleagues to join me in this effort to ensure that the American people's right to a decent standard of living, to freedom beyond anywhere else in the world, that that right, those rights are protected.

COMMEMORATING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST OFFICIALLY RECORDED BASEBALL GAME, HOBOKEN, NJ, JUNE 19, 1846

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. MENENDEZ] is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, for the purposes of the Chair as well as the staff here, I do not intend to take the hour. That is the good news. It should take only about 15 minutes, but they are important minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I rise not to speak about the weighty matters of state that we often get up here and speak about but a little bit about history. Tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, in Hoboken, NJ, which is in my congressional district, the city of Hoboken and its mayor, Anthony Russo, will celebrate the 150th anniversary of the first officially recorded game of baseball. Yes, I am talking about baseball, the national pastime.

On June 19, 1846, the first officially recorded baseball game was played on the Elysian Fields in Hoboken, NJ. Yes, Cooperstown, NY, has the National Baseball Hall of Fame, but history clearly makes Hoboken the birthplace of modern baseball. Through the courtesy of the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum and Frank Borsky of the Hoboken Development Agency, who compiled much of this information in 1976, I would like to highlight this memorable occasion by reading from various accounts of this immortal game.

The game pitted the New York Nine against the Knickerbockers. The Knickerbockers were the most renowned club of that time. The crowded urban conditions in Manhattan forced the clubs to take the ferry across the Hudson to play in Hoboken, then a well-to-do resort.

The scene was described by Seymour Church. He said: "A walk of about a mile and a half from the ferry up the Jersey shore of the Hudson River, along a road that skirted the river bank on one side and was hugged by trees and thickets on the other, brought one suddenly to an opening in the 'forest primeval.' This open spot was a level grass covered plain, some 200 yards across, and as deep—surrounded on three sides by the typical

eastern undergrowth and woods, and on the east by the Hudson. It was a perfect greensward for almost the year around."

The umpire was an American civil engineer named Alexander Cartwright, who many historians say invented baseball contrary to the proponents of Abner Doubleday and for good reason. Under Cartwright's direction, the baseball diamond was laid out. Cartwright's ordering of the game has not appreciably changed in the past 150 years. Prior to this game, there was a casual placement of bases, but not on the Cartwright's plans. Players were stationed at each base with only three outfielders, instead of the random hordes which had previously manned the baselines and the outfield. There were 9 men instead of 11 on a side. Cartwright recognized that most hits were between second and third base, so he placed the player in a new position called a shortstop. Teams batted in regular order with three outs in order to exchange sides batting. This is in contrast with cricket in which a side continues at bat until the entire team was out. Finally outs were made by throwing to bases instead of trying to hit the player with the ball.

Here are some of the rules that governed the first game in Hoboken:

In section 1 of these rules that were written out, it said the bases shall go from home to second 42 paces, from first to third, 42 paces equidistant.

The ball must be pitched, underhand, and not thrown, freehand, for the bat.

A ball knocked outside the range of first or third is foul.

Three balls being struck at and missed and the last one caught in a hand is out; and if not caught, is considered fair. And the striker is bound to run.

A player running the bases shall be out if the ball is in the hands of an adversary and the runner touched by it before he makes his base, it being understood, however, that in no instance, is the ball to be thrown at him.

These are just some of the rules, but what is interesting is that Cartwright laid out the game as we know it today, and he did so in Hoboken, NJ.

The pitcher stood 45 feet from the batter. The catcher stood back far enough to take the ball on a bounce. The umpire stood between the plate and the catcher but to the right and out of the way of the ball. The ball itself was 10 inches in circumference, weighing 6 ounces and had a rubber center.

In September 1845, a group of Cartwright's social acquaintances established a club called the Knickerbockers, the first organized baseball club. The challenge was issued to the New York Nine. At stake was a banquet at McCarty's Hotel near the Elysian Fields of Hoboken. Overconfident, the Knickerbockers did not practice and the team's best player, Cartwright himself, volunteered to umpire. As a matter of fact, baseball's first fine for

"cussing" was levied by Cartwright for 6 cents against a New York Nine player named Davis.

Despite crafting the rules, the Knickerbockers could not match the Nine pitcher with cricket experience who whipped pitches past the Knick batters.

Although it was a perfect day, the Knickerbockers took a drubbing. While beating the New York Nine in their fashion with their uniforms of blue pantaloons and white flannel shirts, mohair caps, and patent leather belts, the Knickerbockers failed to win the game, losing by a score of 23 to 1.

The final result of that game came in the box score, which was subsequently published and is in the New York Public Library.

One hundred years later, the city of Hoboken celebrated the centennial with a bronze marker erected by the New Jersey Commission on Historic Sites.

□ 2230

It reads:

On June 19, 1846, the first match game of baseball was played here on the Elysian Fields between the Knickerbockers and the New Yorks. It is generally conceded that until this time the game was not seriously regarded.

That is the quote on the marker.

That game is seriously regarded today. The people of Hoboken are still proud that America's national pastime was played there, and the people of Hoboken still love the game and will cherish this anniversary, the 150th anniversary, by parades and award dinners that will be held tomorrow evening.

Now, Mr. Speaker, why do I come to the floor of the House to talk about an issue like this? This is more than just hometown pride. This is about a stake in history and about a game that is as American as apple pie, a game that brings families together whether at the stadium, around the TV set, or on the Little League field. It is about dreams, realized; some, broken. It is about a sense of community as cities from coast to coast cheer on their hometown boys. It is about tradition, a great American tradition, for no matter where in the world baseball is played, we know that it was made here in the United States.

I am proud to proclaim Hoboken, NJ, a city with a great tradition. A great city in the 13th Congressional District is the birthplace of baseball.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. WATERS (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today, on account of personal business.

Mrs. LINCOLN (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today and the balance of the week, on account of medical reasons.

Mr. RAMSTAD (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), for today, on account of illness.