

# Reinstate Buck Weaver to Major League Baseball

ClearBuck.com Update

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Issue 11

**1919 Collyer's Eye  
Validates Asinof's  
Claim**

## The Case to Clear Buck Weaver

*Cicotte's \$10,000  
Bonus from  
Comiskey  
Motivation for  
Fix?*

*An Introduction by Dr. David J. Fletcher*

The recent victory of the 2005 World Series by the Chicago White Sox, the first team since 1917 (that contained all eight banned 'Black Sox' players), has drawn attention to the Black Sox scandal and has brought some much-needed publicity to the case of Buck Weaver, former third baseman who has remained on baseball's ineligible list for 85 years.

One of the most controversial aspects of the 1919 World Series fix and the speculation surrounding it was the alleged \$10,000 bonus Cicotte was promised by Charles Comiskey if the pitcher won 30 games.

"In the Wake of the News" columnist Mike Downey's impassioned plea, "High Time for Selig to Pardon Weaver," published in the *Chicago Tribune* on October 20, 2005 says it all:

*"Bud Selig, I have a favor to beg of you.*

*A request, really. A plea. An appeal to you as a decent, honest, red-blooded American who happens to be in charge of our national pastime.*

*You are the commissioner of baseball. You have clout. You have influence.*

*You have say-so.*

*How would you feel about being truly brave? About becoming a hero to the people of Chicago—and to one Chicago man's family in particular—here in a town that hasn't won a World Series for 86 years?*

*Grant amnesty to Buck Weaver."*

Various researchers have debunked this bonus, discrediting Eliot Asinof for including it in his book *Eight Men Out* (Asinof claimed it happened in 1917) and John Sayles for including it in *Eight Men Out*, the movie version of Asinof's book.

Mike Downey's plea for justice and redemption was stunningly beautiful, yet very simple.

Researchers claimed Cicotte had numerous opportunities to

win 30 games and the bonus reference was included purely for its dramatic effect.

When asked about the \$10,000 bonus, Asinof stated on three different occasions that pitcher Red Faber told him this was the motivation behind Cicotte's decision to participate in the 1919 World Series fix. In addition to Asinof's statement, information from "Harry's Diary" claimed Cicotte was working out the details of the fix, presumably with gambler Sport Sullivan, during the White Sox team's second trip to Boston in August 1919.

Since reviewing the long missing 1919 *Collyer's Eye*, the story has popped up once again. In a story published on December 13, 1919, the *Eye* claimed the following:

*"From Detroit the writer*



I have spent the last three years of my life as a real-life Ray Kinsella (*Field of Dreams*), on a mission to clear a deceased baseball player's name and restore honor to his family.

I promised 89-year-old Marge Follett on her deathbed in October 2003 that I would continue her 40-year fight for justice for her beloved uncle Buck.

After an ardent search that has spanned across the country and into Canada, I have amassed the most definitive evidence that establishes without a doubt, Buck Weaver was "clean as a hound's tooth," as stated in an article published November 1, 1919 by Bert E. Collyer, and should be reinstated in baseball.

I prepared a legal brief for the commissioner that argues Buck Weaver's case for reinstatement. Obviously, Weaver is deceased and cannot play baseball again. But his family, particularly his niece and surrogate daughter Patricia Anderson, would appreciate the stain of dishonor removed from her family name.

The family of Dr. Samuel A. Mudd has fought for more than 100 years to get the family name and good honor restored in regards to his alleged role in "aiding and abetting" the escape of John Wilkes Booth, President Abraham Lincoln's assassin. President Jimmy Carter got involved in the case years later when he wrote to Mudd's grandson Dr. Richard D. Mudd in July 1979:

*"A careful reading of the information provided to me about this case led to my personal agreement with the findings of President Johnson. I am hopeful that these conclusions will be given widespread circulation which will restore dignity to your grandfather's name and clear the Mudd family name*

*received a report to the effect that Cicotte has told Harry Bradford that he was through with the game; incidentally claiming that Comiskey had promised the famous knuckle ball artist a bonus of \$10,000 if he won thirty games. This, Cicotte claims, never was made good.*

#### Reinstatement

**Do you think Buck Weaver should be reinstated to MLB?**

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

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*of any negative connotation or implied lack of honor.”*

The case to reinstate Buck Weaver has long lived under the shadows of Joe Jackson, even though Weaver’s case is exponentially stronger. Like Joe Jackson, the Weaver family seeks a resolution in the U.S. Senate urging Major League Baseball to finally act on this case. The resolution would be sponsored by Illinois Senators Dick Durbin and Barack Obama.

Buck Weaver was an honest, likeable man with a high level of integrity. He played the World Series to win and was not involved in any World Series betting scandal. An excerpt from an article published in the *Cincinnati Post* on October 10, 1919 (the day after the World Series ended) by Ross Tenney proves Weaver’s enthusiasm during the Series:

*“Though they are hopeless and heartless, the White Sox have a hero.*

*He is George Weaver, who plays and fights at third base.*

*The Reds have beaten the spirit out of the Sox, all but Weaver.*

*Buck’s spirit is untouched. He was ready to die fighting.*

*Buck is Chicago’s one big hero; long may he fight and smile.”*

Attempts were made to expose the fix before, during and after the 1919 World Series. However, Major League Baseball’s cover-up of the scandal nearly succeeded as it took until September 1920 for the Cook County Grand Jury to convene and further investigate the allegations.

Omission being laid squarely at the feet of Buck Weaver is wrong. There is evidence that Weaver not only told his manager Kid Gleason, but that many other members of the team and the White Sox organization knew of the fix but did nothing to stop it from happening. Snitching on your friends, be they coworkers or teammates, was frowned upon in 1919.

Even in the current baseball environment, exposing another player can be a career ending move. Just look at the reception Rafael Palmeiro received after he said teammate Miguel Tejada had given him a B-12 vitamin shot that might have been responsible for his positive steroid test. The disgraced Palmeiro was abandoned by his team, the Baltimore Orioles, not after his suspension for steroid use, but after he violated clubhouse code by ratting on a teammate.

Jose Canseco, after publishing his tell-all book about the rampant steroid abuse in Major League Baseball which prompted a Congressional hearing was threatened with libel and slander suits and received death threats.

The case to clear Buck Weaver is a legal brief patterned after the document prepared by Chicago attorney Louis R. Hegeman in October 1991. It is updated with new research showing baseball executives – White Sox owner Charles Comiskey and American League president Ban Johnson – had information about a possible fixed World Series and failed to act.

Additional research includes:

1. *Collyer's Eye* 1919 – 1921.
  - a. Chicago-based publication run by Ontario-born entrepreneur Bert E. Collyer, conducted one of the only serious journalistic investigations into the scandal. Shortly after the World Series, *Collyer's Eye* published the names of seven White Sox players suspected of taking part in the scandal. Weaver was not mentioned.
2. The lost writings of Hugh Fullerton, including his 1935 *Sporting News* 'memoir' and his never-published 1922 accounts of the 1919 World Series. Steve Klein's fantastic master's thesis is also included.
3. Buck Weaver vs. Charles Comiskey
  - a. George D. Weaver vs. American League Baseball Club of Chicago in the United States District Court, Northern District of Illinois, Filed 11/26/1921. Case No. 33870.
  - b. George D. Weaver vs. American League Baseball Club of Chicago in the United States Municipal Court of Chicago. Case No. 855871.
4. Harry Grabiner's "Affidavit of Merits" filed on 02/08/1922 as an exhibit in United States District Court Case No. 33870.
5. Ban Johnson's papers at the Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum Library in Cooperstown.
6. JL Hunter's (Hunter Secret Service) dispatch to Harry Grabiner on 05/11/1920 regarding Charles Comiskey's secret investigation into the Black Sox scandal.
7. Joe Jackson vs. Charles Comiskey, 1924 Milwaukee, WI trial transcripts. Defense exhibits stored at Michael Best & Friedrich, LLP, successor law firm for Charles Comiskey, Milwaukee, WI.
8. Judge Hugo Friend's personal scrapbook.
9. Westbrook Pegler's personal papers regarding the 1919 World Series and his 1956 syndicated series on the Black Sox. Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.
10. St. Louis Police Library records regarding police captain Elias Hoagland's arrest of gambler Nat Evans at the Jefferson Hotel with key telegrams, naming names, 04/01/1921.
11. Weaver family personal papers / archives.
12. Oral history with Eliot Asinof about his research and sources for *Eight Men Out*.
13. Lawsuit filed by Buck Weaver against Charles Comiskey for breach of contract.

Commissioner Selig and I have corresponded a few times over the past three years. He wrote in one of his letters that it would be hard to overturn a decision by his predecessor Judge Landis. I reminded the commissioner that baseball didn't integrate until after Judge Landis passed away in 1944.

I'm sure Commissioner Selig and Major League Baseball agree that some terrific Negro League stars, most notably Josh Gibson, missed out on a wonderful opportunity due to Landis' edict not to allow integration.

Mr. Selig stated on the record that he is reviewing Buck Weaver's case. This review has apparently been going on for the past six years with no decision.

As recent as October 19, 2005, Selig stated on Chicago's WMVP-AM "Sylvie and Carmen Show" that Weaver's case was under review with the aid of former baseball historian Jerome Holtzman.

The time has come. Buck Weaver deserves to have a hearing and due process to determine his eligibility for reinstatement. He was a baseball superstar until he was professionally, personally, and economically ruined by Landis' unjust punishment.

After Landis unfairly banned Buck from the game he loved, he remained in Chicago and worked odd jobs. Despite his hard work, Buck could never achieve the same level of success, and as a result, lies under a humble headstone in Chicago's Hope Mount Cemetery next to his wife's unmarked grave.

## **Reinstate Buck Weaver to Major League Baseball**

*Petition for the restoration of George Daniel 'Buck' Weaver to the ranks of Major League Baseball*

NOW come supporters of GEORGE DANIEL 'BUCK' WEAVER (hereinafter "Buck Weaver") former third baseman for the Chicago White Sox, by DR. DAVID J. FLETCHER and members of the CLEARBUCK.COM campaign (hereinafter ClearBuck.com), petitioning the Honorable ALAN H. 'BUD' SELIG, Commissioner of Major League Baseball, pursuant to Rule 21 of Major League Baseball, to restore the name of Buck Weaver to the ranks of eligible player of Major League Baseball.

### NATURE OF THE PETITION

This petition requests removing Buck Weaver from Major League Baseball's ineligible list. As the Commissioner is well aware, Buck Weaver was banned from baseball in 1921 by Commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis, for his alleged involvement in the 1919 World Series scandal.

Over time the 1919 "Black Sox" scandal, as it came to be known, remained a dominant part of Americana through books, television and major motion pictures. From F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, to the 1961 CBS production of *Witness* that led to the publication of Eliot Asinof's *Eight Men Out* in 1963, to the movie productions of *The Natural*, *Field of Dreams*, and *Eight Men Out*, the Black Sox scandal has been rich fodder for the literary, stage and screen mind.

At the forefront of the sports history debate relating to the 1919 World Series, is the argument for Joe Jackson's eligibility for Hall of Fame induction. While Jackson's statistics are extraordinary and in other circumstances would no doubt warrant induction into the Hall of Fame, his story has overshadowed that of Buck Weaver and the injustices of the 1919 World Series scandal. Unlike his banned teammates, Weaver took no money, demanded a separate trial and remained in Chicago until the day he died. His stats in the 1919 World Series clearly reflect his innocence. The

argument that he was ‘in the know’ and failed to tell his club is not only an invalid accusation because of the laws and rules of baseball at the time, but also because other members of the White Sox organization were ‘guilty’ of this infraction but received no punishment.

This petition seeks the hearing that Buck Weaver and his family have been denied for 86 years, thereby allowing the opportunity to show the Commissioner that: (1) Evidence clearly shows Buck Weaver played the World Series to win and separate him from his accused teammates; (2) Buck Weaver’s silence was based on innocence and ignorance and it would have served no purpose to tell members of the White Sox organization because they already knew the rumors of the gambling scandal; and (3) there are ample grounds for the current Commissioner to rule Buck Weaver’s sentence served and restore him to the eligible list posthumously.

ClearBuck.com proffers this petition in the belief that Commissioner Landis’ ruling regarding Buck Weaver was decisive and dictatorial. While we believe action was needed to quell baseball’s gambling problem, the select few individuals chosen to be made examples of, was shortsighted and naïve. Granted, excuses may be made that his decision was made abruptly, in a time of emergency, to help restore the public’s trust in baseball. But this objective should not have come at the expense of a true baseball hero – a man who devoted his entire life to baseball, playing each game with passion and intensity, and offering advice to young kids in the hopes that his excitement of the sport would be passed to future generations.

Buck Weaver is undoubtedly a man in the baseball world who should be admired and respected. We will present herein for consideration, opinions, articles, and legal documents that have been undiscovered or overlooked that support Buck Weaver’s reinstatement to baseball. In support of this petition on behalf of Buck Weaver, ClearBuck.com shows the Office of the Commissioner the following:

### BACKGROUND FACTS

1. The 1919 White Sox have been regarded as a collection of exceptional ballplayers, most of whom were part of the 1917 World Series championship team. The starting lineup in 1919 was as follows: pitchers – Lefty Williams, Eddie Cicotte, Dickie Kerr; catcher Ray Schalk; 1<sup>st</sup> baseman Chick Gandil; 2<sup>nd</sup> baseman Eddie Collins; 3<sup>rd</sup> baseman Buck Weaver; shortstop Swede Risberg; left field Joe Jackson; center field Happy Felsch; and right field Shano Collins.

2. The 1919 White Sox team was comprised of a group of men from varying geographical locations, social classes and educational backgrounds. Some members of the starting lineup like Ray Schalk, Eddie Collins and Dickie Kerr attended college, while the majority of the players came from a blue collar background, Buck Weaver included. Coincidentally, or perhaps purposefully, the eight players banned for their alleged involvement in the ‘Black Sox’ scandal shared a blue collar social underclass.

3. Buck Weaver’s career in Major League Baseball was book-ended by

tragedy. He broke into the Majors on the heels of his mother's death in 1912 and was ripped from his livelihood in 1921 for a scandal he vowed he did not take part. An article by Sam Weller published in the *Chicago Tribune* in March 1912 captured Buck Weaver's character and forecasted his baseball legacy:

*"A boy of 20 years who has more grit than any other player...arrived (in camp) without mentioning the death of his mother to Manager Callahan, he got into his baseball suit and started after the job as shortstop for Comiskey's team. Not a man on the squad displayed as much enthusiasm in his work..."*

Sam Weller  
*Chicago Tribune*  
March 1921

#### THE 'FIXED' 1919 WORLD SERIES

4. There are so many conflicting accounts and recollections of the 1919 World Series that the details of the affair need not be recanted for the Commissioner of Major League Baseball. However, the very reason for these conflicting accounts is of great importance to Buck Weaver's case. The 1919 World Series fix was not a calculated endeavor. It was an operation of cheaters cheating cheaters, where gamblers and players double-crossed one another until the scheme was nothing but a matrix of confusion. This fact raises serious doubts as to what knowledge and subsequent action can be asserted on Buck Weaver when the participants themselves were never certain of the situation.

5. While there is great uncertainty and debate about how and when the 1919 World Series was fixed, records indicate the entire team struggled in this postseason, with few exceptions: Risberg had four errors and hit .080, Felsch (a .300 hitter) batted .192, Cicotte (a 29-game winner) and Williams (a 23-game winner) lost 5 games that series, and Collins was charged with two critical errors.

6. One of the exceptions on the White Sox team was Buck Weaver. His brilliant play in the 1919 World Series is substantiated by the numbers: his .324 batting average was second highest on the team. Additionally, his flawless 1.000 fielding percentage spanned all eight games of the 1919 World Series. Numbers don't lie.

#### MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL FAILS TO STOP SCANDALOUS SERIES

7. Chicago gambler Monte Tennes reported that he told Charles Weeghman, owner of the Chicago Cubs, that the forthcoming World Series was fixed. He claimed he learned about the fix at that Saratoga Race Track in August 1919 from owner Arnold Rothstein. Tennes shared this information with Weeghman at the Palmer House Hilton in Chicago on September 1, 1919. Weeghman told Ban Johnson and Charles Comiskey. An emergency meeting of the National Commission (including Chairman Garry Herrmann) met in Chicago but failed to act or investigate. (source - Sports Bill Corum:

1938 story, “No One Believed”)

8. Hugh Fullerton said that he spoke with Comiskey and Johnson of the fix before Game 1, pleading them to halt the Series. He called the baseball powers “whitewashing bastards” when they failed to take action, deciding instead to let the Series continue and collect the record gate receipts that awaited them. (source – *The Sporting News*: October 17, 1935 story, “I Recall”)

#### SPECULATION OF A WORLD SERIES SCANDAL

9. Rumors of a World Series fix began to rumble in the press box and on October 12, 1919, just a few days following the end of the World Series, Chicago reporter Hugh Fullerton published an article in the *Chicago Herald and Examiner* that galvanized public opinion and led to a media investigation of the alleged scandal.

*“Yesterday’s, in all probability, is the last game that will be played in any World Series. If the club owners, and those who have the interest of the game at heart, have listened during the Series, they will call off the annual interleague contest...Yesterday’ game also means the disruption of the Chicago White Sox ballclub. There are SEVEN men on the team who will not be there when the gong sounds next Spring...”*

Hugh Fullerton  
*Chicago Herald and Examiner*  
October 10, 1919

Fullerton’s article speculated seven players were involved in a World Series fix, omitting Buck Weaver from the list of accused. Another Chicago publication, *Collyer’s Eye*, ran a story similar to Hugh Fullerton’s claiming “Involve 7 Sox in World’s Series Scandal” which was published just six days after Fullerton’s *Chicago Herald and Examiner* piece. Again, the article claimed seven men were under suspicion for throwing the 1919 World Series.

10. Ed Bang of the *Cleveland Times* reported in his daily column on September 29, 1920, “Just Between You and Me,” that the announcement of players conspiring to toss the Series last October “did not come as a great surprise to the writer in only one respect...” Bang was surprised that Buck Weaver was lumped in with the crooked list of White Sox players. Why was he surprise? Because he had heard all the other names “mentioned in connection with the scandal, but Weaver was always as clean as a hound’s tooth in all the reports that came to our ears.”

11. With media reports and public outcry increasing, Charles Comiskey offered a \$10,000 reward for information that proved members of his team helped throw the World Series. Reporter Frank Klein pointed out however, “that various scribes – baseball writers – generally accredited with being on the pay roll, are moving heaven and earth for the SUPPRESSION bureau.”<sup>[1]</sup> With each passing year, new research has indicated *Collyer’s Eye* was correct in its inference that Charles Comiskey and the baseball organization did what they could to cover up the 1919 World Series fix.

12. As part of Frank Klein's investigative series on the World Series 'Black Sox' scandal, *Collyer's Eye* published the names of the innocent players on the White Sox organization. The paragraph read as follows:

*In justice to the boys who gave their best to the game, it is of moment to say my investigations show that Capt. Eddie Collins, Buck Weaver, Dick Kerr, John Collins, Nemo Liebold and Ray Schalk came out of the series "clean as a hound's tooth." You may write the other two lines yourself."*

Frank Klein  
*Collyer's Eye*  
November 1, 1919

13. White Sox catcher Ray Schalk was quoted in the December 13<sup>th</sup> issue of *Collyer's Eye* that Williams, Cicotte, Gandil, McMullen, Risberg, Felsh and Jackson would be missing from the line-up in 1920. Weaver is noticeably absent in yet another first-hand account of the World Series scandal.



#### THE BASIS OF BUCK WEAVER'S BANISHMENT

14. Commissioner Landis banned Buck Weaver based on the judicial records of two events: the 1920 Grand Jury investigation and the 'Black Sox' trial in the fall of 1921. The first reference came from the testimony from Claude Williams and Joe Jackson during the Grand Jury investigation. The second reference came as a result of an examination of gambler Bill Burns during the 1921 trial. Both references to Buck Weaver are insubstantial and incompetent evidence of his involvement in the World Series fix.

15. On September 28, 1920 Eddie Cicotte, Joe Jackson, and Claude Williams confessed to a Grand Jury that they threw the 1919 World Series to the Cincinnati Reds. A key commonality in the testimony by Jackson and Williams which discusses Weaver's alleged involvement is their reference to Chic Gandil's pitch: everyone on the White Sox team was 'in' on the fix. Based on this testimony Buck Weaver was loosely implicated.

*Q. DID YOU EVER TALK TO BUCK WEAVER ABOUT IT?*

*A. No, sir, I never talked to Buck Weaver, never talked very much.*

*Q. DID YOU KNOW THE TIME BUCK WAS IN ON THE DEAL?*

*A. They told me he was; he never told me it himself.*

*Q. WHO TOLD YOU?*

*A. Chick told me.*

16. The above testimony was the sole evidence extracted from the Grand Jury investigation concerning Buck Weaver. Nevertheless, Weaver was indicted along with seven other teammates on October 27, 1920.

#### GRAND JURY LEARNS OF COVER-UP BY COMISKEY

17. The *Sporting News* ran a story on November 6, 1920 that claimed, "Grand Jury Climaxed By Proof That Comiskey Was Told." This story outlined in detail Comiskey's knowledge of the 1919 World Series fix and his attempts to cover-up the investigation to protect his investment. This substantiated the reports by *Collyer's Eye* from October / November 1919.

#### COMISKEY VIEWED WEAVER SEPARATE FROM SEVEN OTHER SOX PLAYERS

18. Comiskey hired the Hunter's Secret Service to investigate the Black Sox scandal. They uncovered no involvement by Weaver in the fix, nor any change in lifestyle due to a sudden increase in profits. In a December 14, 1920 issue of *Collyer's Eye*, "Buck Weaver Back With the White Sox?" it reported that Comiskey promised Weaver – separate from the other seven players – that he would be reinstated to baseball if he was acquitted in the Cook County trial. According to Charles Comiskey II, grandson of the original Sox owner, if Comiskey had the power to clear Weaver, he would have.

#### 1921 COOK COUNTRY TRIAL

19. The infamous 'Black Sox' trial took place in the fall of 1921 where Judge Hugo Friend presided. Buck Weaver's lawyer Thomas Nash requested at the outset of the trial that Weaver be tried separately because of the glaring differences between his conduct and that of his teammates. The request was dismissed.

20. Judge Friend, though he refused a separate trial for Buck Weaver, later announced from the bench that if the jury found Weaver 'guilty,' he would respond with a verdict of 'not guilty' because there was no evidence to support a verdict against him. (source: Judge Hugo Friend's personal papers)

21. The second and final reference to Buck Weaver came up during gambler Bill Burns' testimony. On direct examination, Burns stated that Weaver, along with his teammates, attended a meeting in room 708 of the Sinton

Hotel. However, Burn's testimony was directly rebutted by Kid Gleason, manager and Ray Schalk, catcher of the 1919 White Sox team. They testified that the White Sox were practicing in full view of the public at the ballpark during the alleged meeting at the Sinton Hotel.

22. Buck Weaver was acquitted on August 2, 1921. The following day, Commissioner Landis delivered his dictatorial decision to ban all players from baseball for life, regardless of the verdict of the jury.

*"Regardless of the verdicts of juries, no player who entertains proposals or promises to throw a game, no player who sits in conference with a bunch of crooked players and gamblers where the ways and means of throwing games are discussed and does not promptly tell the club about it will ever play professional baseball."*

K.M. Landis  
Commissioner of Baseball  
August 3, 1921

#### THE 1924 TRIAL – JACKSON VS. COMISKEY

23. The second Black Sox trial is the only account of the scandal where witnesses are under oath and subject to cross examination according to Tom Cannon, grandson of attorney Ray Cannon. This trial established that Comiskey had engineered a cover-up that nearly worked. Comiskey had guilty knowledge and therefore should have received the same punishment as Buck Weaver.

#### SILENCE DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A LIFETIME BAN

24. Buck Weaver's ban was based on 'guilty knowledge.' However, based on the baseball environment in 1919, Weaver's silence does not constitute a legal basis for banning Buck Weaver.

A. Those in power of the baseball world failed to halt the 1919 World Series even though strong "rumors" existed of a fixed World Series. The owners and managers were less than candid to the public about the gamblers' stronghold on professional baseball. They chose to pretend that "eight men out" punished baseball's single sin - as if the 1919 World Series was the first tampering, and the last.

B. Rule 21 did not exist in baseball in 1919. Players did not have the benefit of a Commissioner, a player's union, or agents to watch out for their best interests. Instead, player's were poorly paid and essentially belonged to their ball clubs.

C. The basis for Weaver's banishment is naïve in the sense that he was the only member of the White Sox organization who had knowledge of the fix and didn't report it to his team. Catcher Ray Schalk was behind the plate for pitchers Williams and Cicotte for years. They coordinated their signs and Schalk knew his pitchers' game. During the Series, as printed in *Collyer's*

*Eye* on October 18, 1919, Schalk attacked Williams in the locker room charging him with crossing him on pitches. Similar to Buck Weaver, Schalk played the Series to win; and like Buck Weaver, Schalk had knowledge of a World Series fix and didn't report it to his team.

D. If the alleged locker room fiasco occurred, and Schalk attacked Williams charging him with throwing the World Series, than the entire White Sox team, including manager "Kid" Gleason, knew about the allegations. Every person in that locker room was aware of the rumors and witnessed firsthand, a direct accusation from one player to another. And yet only Buck Weaver was the only player on the White Sox roster banned for having 'guilty knowledge.'

### REINSTATEMENT EFFORTS

25. Within one year of the 1921 verdict banning Buck Weaver from baseball for life, he submitted a petition to Commissioner Landis, signed by 14,000 fans. Commissioner Landis rejected his reinstatement attempt.

26. Weaver met with Landis on January 22, 1922 to request reinstatement. But because Weaver still refused to rat on his teammates as Landis' ultimatum required, his request was denied yet again. "I was not certain which men, if any, had accepted propositions, whether they accepted," Landis responded. "Birds of a feather flock together. Men associating with gamblers and crooks could expect no leniency."

27. Weaver made multiple attempts at reinstatement over the years. His most notable came during his testimony in a 1927 trial for the Tris Speaker/ Ty Cobb betting scandal. While on the stand, he demanded to be reinstated, proclaiming he didn't owe baseball a thing. Landis once again rejected Weaver's efforts.

28. Abe Attell, gambler and participant in the 1919 World Series fix, made an effort to tell Commissioner Landis that Buck Weaver had nothing to do with fixing the 1919 World Series. According to Joe Williams' *Reader* in an April 1934 interview with Abe Attell, he stated clearly, "that **seven** Sox players were in on the payoff. Buck Weaver was not. I even went to Landis and made a personal plea for him. The kid didn't get a dime out of it, and he didn't know what was going on either."

29. Finally in 1953, just three years before his death, Weaver wrote a letter to Commissioner Ford Frick requesting reinstatement. The letter is prominently displayed in the Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum in Cooperstown, NY.[2]

### THE INTEGRITY OF THE GAME AND ORGANIZATION OF BASEBALL

30. Reinstating Buck Weaver only serves to enhance the integrity of the game of baseball. Not only is Weaver's case unique in that he was the only banned player to not take money, he played the 1919 World Series to the best of his ability. He was the only banned player to remain in Chicago and

professed his innocence until the day he died. Reopening this case will not set a precedent subjecting the Commissioner's Office with a flood of petitions. Buck Weaver's case is very unique, with substantiating evidence that proves his innocence.

31. Commissioner Selig has gone on record that he is having Jerome Holtzman, the official historian for Major League Baseball, review the case of Buck Weaver. Holtzman has also gone on record on different occasions stating that Weaver deserves to be reinstated.

A. In a 1992 *Chicago Tribune* column, "Weaver Case Seems To Be Lost In Limbo," Holtzman wrote, "it would seem perhaps the time has come for mercy."

B. In 2004, Jerome Holtzman said of the more than the dozen players who have been banned from baseball over the years, that he considers Weaver the only one who, "has a chance to be reinstate, or at least should be considered for reinstatement."

32. Reopening the case of Buck Weaver would demonstrate the honor and integrity of Major League Baseball. A man's name and reputation is all we take to our grave and all that remains after our death. Buck Weaver's surviving relatives are relying on the current Commissioner and the nobility of Major League Baseball, to grant Buck Weaver the trial he never received.

33. As demonstrated with the recently passed Senate resolution honoring White Sox outfielder Joe Jackson, there is a need in the country to recognize those outstanding individuals from our baseball history. While Buck Weaver was not able to finish his career, and therefore not post stellar numbers consistent with a career of longevity, he brought a unique passion and integrity to the game of baseball and therefore we submit the attached resolution on his behalf.

34. Players have been reinstated before. Former Commissioner Bowie Kuhn reinstated pitcher Ray Fisher in 1980 after Landis banned him in the 1920s.

35. Baseball is founded on certain values, most particularly the value of fair play. Until now, Buck Weaver has not had a public hearing concerning his suspension.

36. The latin phrase *ex post facto* – *after the fact* was so abhorred by our founding fathers that a clause was written into our constitution banning this type of legislation. How can it be fair then, that Judge Landis used this way of thinking to ban the White Sox players and eventually make up these rules two years after they were allegedly broken?

37. Rule 21 did not exist in 1919, yet Buck Weaver was banned *ex post facto*.

WHEREFORE, ClearBuck respectfully moves the Honorable Commissioner Alan H. "Bud" Selig to appoint such commissioners, committees, or hearing officers as is deemed appropriate, to hold such hearings or procedures as are necessary to review the reinstatement of George Daniel "Buck" Weaver to

the eligible list of Major League Baseball. ClearBuck moves that the Commissioner considers all evidence herewith and expeditiously declares Buck Weaver's restoration.

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[1] Frank Klein, special investigator for *Collyer's Eye*, speculated about baseball's cover up in the October 18, 1919 issue headlined, "COMMY OFFERS \$10,000 REWARD FOR EVIDENCE SERIES WAS THROWN."

[2] Judge Hugo Friend who presided over the 1921 Cook County trial was compelled to write a letter on Buck Weaver's behalf. He also wrote a letter to the Commissioner in 1953 as indicated in the records of Major League Baseball.

## Summary of the 1919 Collyer's Eye Investigation

*Collyer's Eye issues provide new insight into the Black Sox Scandal and the case to reinstate Buck Weaver*



The World Series expose began with a succession of articles published in *Collyer's Eye* that included predictions and betting odds. It seems clear that the seeds of the 1919 World Series scandal were sown before game one was even played.

"2,000,000 WILL BE BET ON WORLD SERIES // 7-10 IF WHITE SOX OPEN HERE, EVEN MONEY IF REDS WIN TOSS" blared the September 13, 1919 *Collyer's Eye* headline in a story written by *Cleveland Times* reporter Ed Bang. The home field advantage for the nine game series was to be determined by a coin flip. This same issue predicted Dickie Kerr would be the hero of the World Series for the White Sox.

Another prophetic article in the September 20, 1919 edition of *Collyer's Eye* alleged that White Sox teammates had come to a unanimous decision to negotiate their contracts before the 1920 season. **With the exception of Buck Weaver** who signed a three year contract in 1918, nearly all players were up for contract renewals between the 1919 and 1920 seasons.

An anonymous team member was quoted as saying, "We've given Comiskey and the White Sox our best efforts all season and some of us suffered a cut in salary over the previous season, but there must be a substantial increase in my pay check and I know I speak for the other fellows, before we'll play on the Southside again. Players who do not compare in ability with men at the same positions on the Sox are drawing down more money a year than we are and this must not be."

Within this same issue the "First Complete List of Odds on World's

Series...” was published. Reporter Joe Le Blanc claimed the largest layer of odds on the baseball classic in New York City were made known in response to a request by *Collyer’s Eye*. The odds are listed as follows:

	4-5	White Sox win the series.
	7-10	White Sox win first game if played in
Chicago.		
	Even	Reds win first game if played in Cincinnati.
	20-1	Neither team wins five straight.
	4-5	Cicotte wins first game he pitches.
	Even	Reuther wins first game he pitches.
	2-1	Neither Roush nor Felsch makes home run.
	7-5	Jackson out hits Roush.
	7-5	White Sox score more shutouts than Reds.

This issue also was the first publication to state that Judge Landis would be tendered the “Chairmanship of the National Commission.”

The September 27, 1919 issue of *Collyer’s Eye* trumpeted, “ASTROLOGERS PICK REDS TO TRIM WHITE SOX” because the Reds were “Born under Lucky Stars.”

The October 4, 1919 issue ran a story: “Chicago Fans Place Secret Commission at Cincy at 13-10 to Win Series” which outlined in detail the betting that had gone down in the first games of the 1919 World Series and how the odds shifted.

As most people are aware, the completion of the 1919 World Series prompted numerous reports of game fixing and questionable World Series play. On October 18, 1919, *Collyer’s Eye* led with the headline, “INVOLVE 7 SOX IN WORLD’S SERIES SCANDAL.” Frank Klein, special investigator for *Collyer’s Eye*, stated seven members of the White Sox team were ‘under suspicion,’ and offered up an interesting point of view related to the \$10,000 reward owner Charles Comiskey offered to anyone with knowledge that members of his team threw the Series. In his story, Klein offered, “It is noticeable, however, that various scribes – baseball writers – generally accredited with being on the [Comiskey] pay roll, are moving heaven and earth for the SUPPRESSION bureau.”

He continued that ‘considerable fire lies beneath the smoke’ and credited Abe Attel and the Levy brothers of St. Louis with the gambling end of the Series scandal. He went on to write, “a well-known bookmaker from New York is given the credit of being the “brains” of the affair. Next week I will endeavor to give readers of this publication a bit more details of my findings, which I promise will be prosecuted to the very limit of my resources.”

The publication followed with a story that claimed sufficient data was accumulated to warrant an investigation of pitcher Eddie Cicotte. It also alleged that Claude Williams and Happy Felsch got drunk at Ellis’ Café on 39<sup>th</sup> Street (and Cottage Grove) the evening prior to leaving for Cincinnati for the first game. This story claimed a brawl ensued after game two when catcher Ray Schalk charged Williams with throwing the game. When Risberg and Felsch came to his relief, it was openly charged that all three

were in collusion.

Klein wrote, “Strenuous efforts on the part of the “suppression bureau” which exists among those baseball writers who ever and anon have been on the payroll, succeeded in keeping the imbroglio from the local papers.”

Probably one of the most striking revelations in the article was given by an informant of Frank Klein who confirmed the charge that a person close to pitcher Claude Williams wagered \$2,000 with him on the Reds.

“I was surprised when a striking blonde whom I knew was close to Williams came to the cigar stand with a roll of \$2,000 to bet on Cincinnati.”

“Ain’t you the friend of Mrs. Williams?” I asked.

“Yes,” replied the woman, “This is Claude’s money, or at least a good part of it.”

Klein ended this article promising to publish the names of those members of the White Sox organization who have been cleared by his investigation in next week’s *Collyer’s Eye*.

In the November 1, 1919 article headlined, “Klein Clears Several White Sox Players of Wrong-doing in World’s Series,” he stated Comiskey was upset that *Collyer’s Eye* had printed these stories because, as he quoted Comiskey, “it might give time for the culprits to cover-up.” This article also talked about a federal investigation into the World Series for mail fraud and abuse of the telegraph lines. *Collyer’s Eye* also refused to accept the \$10,000 reward offered by Charles Comiskey for information about a possible fix.

And, as promised in his article written the week prior, he stated:

“In justice to the boys who gave their best to the game, it is of moment to say my investigations who that Capt. Eddie Collins, **Buck Weaver**, Dick Kerr, John Collins, Nemo Liebold and Ray Schalk came out of the series “**clean as a hound’s tooth**.” You may write the other two lines yourself.”

On November 7, 1919, Klein reported it was rumored at baseball headquarters that Eddie Collins was slated to succeed “Kid” Gleason as manager of the team in 1920. Charles Meekin who occupied a seat in the press box during the first two games played in Chicago, confirmed the rumor with the following statement, “I was astounded when a representative of the telegraph company told me that Owner Comiskey had wired instructions to Eddie Collins to take charge of the team. If memory serves me correctly, my informant said the message read ‘Take charge of the team. Believe you are up against it but do the best you can.’ The playing of the Sox plainly indicated that something was wrong... This, with the added accusation that Manager Gleason ‘had been stepping,’ was supposed to have come to the ears of Comiskey, with the above result.” Klein claimed that Collins did assume management of the team for the remainder of the Series.

The story also stated messages received from New York confirming that

'everything was fixed,' were substantiated. Abe Attel won approximately \$15,000, while Reid, a Chicago bookmaker, made \$76,000.

Klein's November 15, 1919 *Collyer's Eye* article "Discover 'Payoff Joint' in White Sox Scandal? Poolroom at 39<sup>th</sup> St. and Indiana Ave. Alleged Scene of Split of Money" identified the Claremont Saloon as the alleged scene of the "pay off." Following is a highlight of some of the rumors investigated by Klein:

Ø That Cicotte, Williams, Jackson, and Felsch were under investigation. That they were seen at the poolroom and bowling alley of the Claremont, immediately following the (8<sup>th</sup>) game.

Ø That Gandil, who is alleged to be somewhat of a gambler, wired from Cincinnati the following message: "I have bet my boots."

Ø That Pittsburgh, Chicago, St. Louis and New York gamblers made approximately \$500,000 on the Series.

Ø That Cicotte claimed he was promised \$10,000 by Comiskey and didn't get it.

Ø That Bill James was promised to pitch game four on Saturday October 4, 1919 (lost 2-0 by the Sox with Cicotte's key error contributing to the loss) by Kid Gleason but James had drunk too much at Campbell's Gardens, known as a strip club.

On December 13, 1919, *Collyer's Eye* investigative reporter Frank Klein wrote yet another article that alleged seven members would not return to the White Sox team as a result of the World Series scandal. This time the article named names. Sox catcher Ray Schalk declared pitchers Williams and Cicotte, first baseman Gandil, infielders McMullen and Risberg and outfielders Felsch and Jackson would be missing from the line-up in 1920.

The article also stated that Cicotte told writer Harry Bradford that he was through with the game. He claimed once again, that Comiskey had promised a bonus of \$10,000 if he won thirty games but Comiskey never made good on his promise.

Before the explosive testimony of Cicotte, Jackson, and Williams before the Grand Jury on September 28, 1920 and Felsch's "print confession," *Collyer's Eye* had printed articles "Ouster of 'Wrecking Crew' Demanded of White Sox // Old Guard Plans Drive to Clean Out Team" and "Sox Reveal Inside of Scandal: Offers Evidence to Johnson in mid September 1920."

Bert Collyer never received his due credit for his role in exposing the 1919 World Series scandal. He helped save "baseball from the fate of foot racing" believed that "the best sports are fostered and developed by the best business men of the country and they demand clean sport for their recreation - whether it be baseball, horse racing, or billiards..."

The October 2, 1920 headline of *Collyer's Eye* proclaims, "White Sox

Indictments Vindicate Collyer's Eye // Grand Jury Probe Verifies Facts as Printed in This Paper." Bert Collyer commented, "The most startling exposure of the sporting world in the memory of living men was something that had to be handled with the up most caution and good judgment. This was accomplished by the publication and has now been amply evidenced by the action of the Grand Jury and the state's attorney who in conjunction, step by step, discovered the same details as printed in this publication beginning almost a year ago. The exposure of this scandal added to the numerous beats this publication has had and it's further evidence why it is considered the authority in its field."

Sadly, Bert Collyer and Frank Klein were not called to testify during the 1920 Grand Jury proceedings or during the 1921 Black Sox trial.

In summary, *Collyer's Eye* special investigator Frank Klein was the most thorough and contemporaneous reporting of the 1919 World Series scandal. These articles shed new light on the 1919 Black Sox scandal and provide a unique perspective of the 1919 rumor mill. The series of articles seems to have implicated Jackson's deeper role in the scandal than previously known and absolutely clears Buck Weaver.

While these articles may cause new questions to arise regarding player and executive involvement, one thing seems to be quite clear: **Buck Weaver was unjustly banned and should undoubtedly be reinstated to Major League Baseball.**

*All Collyer's Eye graphics and information courtesy of the UIUC Illinois Historical Survey.*