

'Shoeless Joe' Jackson

"Joseph Jefferson Jackson (July 16, 1888 – December 5, 1951), nicknamed "Shoeless Joe", was an American baseball player who played Major League Baseball in the early part of the 20th century. He is remembered for his performance on the field and for his association with the Black Sox Scandal, when members of the 1919 Chicago White Sox participated in a conspiracy to fix the World Series. As a result of Jackson's association with the scandal, Kenesaw Mountain Landis, Major League Baseball's first commissioner, banned Jackson from playing after the 1920 season.

Jackson played for three different Major League teams during his twelve-year career. He spent 1908-09 as a member of the Philadelphia Athletics; 1910 through the first part of the 1915 with the Cleveland Naps/Indians; and the remainder of the 1915 season through 1920 with the Chicago White Sox. Jackson, who played left field for most of his career, currently has the third highest career batting average. With his career having been cut short, the usual decline of a batter's hitting skills toward the end of a career did not have a chance to occur. In 1911, Jackson hit for a .408 average. That average is still the sixth highest single-season total since 1901, which marked the beginning of the modern era for the sport. His average that year set the record for highest batting average in a single season by a rookie. Babe Ruth claimed that he modeled his hitting technique after Jackson's. Jackson still holds the White Sox franchise records for triples in a season and career batting average. In 1999, he ranked Number 35 on The Sporting News' list of the 100 Greatest Baseball Players and was nominated as a finalist for the Major League Baseball All-Century Team. Jackson ranks 33rd on the all-time list for non-pitchers according to the win shares formula developed by Bill James.

During the remaining twenty years of his baseball career, Jackson played and managed with a number of minor league teams, most located in Georgia and South Carolina. In 1922, Jackson returned to Savannah

and opened a dry cleaning business. In 1933, the Jacksons moved back to Greenville, SC. After first opening a barbecue restaurant, Jackson and his wife opened "Joe Jackson's Liquor Store," which they operated until his death. One of the better known stories of Jackson's post-major league life took place at his liquor store. Ty Cobb and sportswriter Grantland Rice entered the store, with Jackson showing no sign of recognition towards Cobb. After making his purchase, the incredulous Cobb finally asked Jackson, "Don't you know me, Joe?" Jackson replied, "Sure, I know you, Ty, but I wasn't sure you wanted to know me. A lot of them don't." As he aged, Joe Jackson began to suffer from heart trouble. In 1951, at 63, Jackson died of a heart attack. He is buried at nearby Woodlawn Memorial Park." [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shoeless_Joe_Jackson]

