Rating Baseball Families

1 Introduction

In Bill James *The New Bill James Historical Abstract* he judges baseball families as follows:

First use his WIN SHARE method to assign to each player a number indicating how good they are (this is, in itself, an entire book called *Win Shares*). Second, if a family has n people in it, say they are, from best to worst, $p_1, p_2, \ldots, p_n$ and they have win share values $w_1, \ldots, w_n$ then the family gets the value

$$w_1 + 2w_2 + 3w_3 + \cdots + nw_n.$$

This rewards families that really have several good players.

Someone told me that instead you should do:

$$\log_2(w_1) + \log_2(w_2) + \log_2(w_3) + \cdots + \log_2(w_n).$$

Does anything change? Does it make sense? The numbers below indicate that it does not- too much credit is giving for having lots of people even if they really aren't that good. If the players scores were much closer together than the log-method might work. Since I would guess that most baseball fans don't know what logarithms are, James was right to have a rating system where (easily understood) linear weights work.

We list the families from the book in the order using the first method (his method) and see if it changes if we use the stats method. These numbers are as of 2003. Some of the people are still active so those numbers may have changed. In particular, the Bonds may now be number 1.

1. Alou's:
   (a) Felipe: 244
   (b) Matty: 179
   (c) Moses: 142
   (d) Jesus: 78
   (e) Total James Method: 1440.
   (f) Total Stats Method: 28.8497
2. DiMaggio's:
   (a) Joe: 385
   (b) Dom: 220
   (c) Vince: 138
   (d) Total James Method: 1239
   (e) Total Stat Method: 23.4786

3. Bond's
    (a) Barry Bonds: 438 (as of 2003)
    (b) Bobby Bonds: 301
    (c) Total James Method: 1040
    (d) Total Stat Method: 17.0084
4. Waner's
    (a) Paul: 423
    (b) Lloyd: 245
    (c) Total James Method: 913
    (d) Total Stat Method: 16.6612
5. Boone's
    (a) Bob: 209
    (b) Ray: 166
    (c) Bert: 89
    (d) Aaron: 21
    (e) Total James Method: 892
    (f) Total Stat Method: 25.9504
6. Delahanty
    (a) Ed: 356
    (b) Jim: 147
    (c) Joe: 21
    (d) Frank: 20
    (e) Tom: 1
    (f) Total James Method: 798
    (g) Total Stat Method: 24.3897
7. Griffey's
    (a) Ken Jr: 277 (through 2003)
    (b) Ken Sr: 256
    (c) Total James Method: 789
    (d) Total Stat Method: 16.1137
8. Perry's

(a) Gaylord: 367
(b) Jim: 205
(c) Total James Method: 777
(d) Total Stat Method: 16.1991

9. Alomar

(a) Roberto: 286
(b) Sandy Sr: 104
(c) Sandy Jr: 88
(d) Total James Method: 758
(e) Total Stat Method: 21.2197

10. Ruth

(a) Babe: 758
(b) : Total James Method: 758
(c) Total Stat Method: 9.5661

11. Niekro

(a) Phil: 375
(b) Joe: 188
(c) Total James Method: 751
(d) Total Stat Method: 16.1053

12. Bell

(a) Buddy: 299
(b) Gus: 176
(c) David: 28 (as of 2003)
(d) Total James Method: 735
(e) Total Stat Method: 20.4908

13. Cobb

(a) Ty: 726
(b) Total James Method: 726
(c) Total Stat Method: 9.5038

14. Wagner's

(a) Honus: 655
(b) Butts: 2
(c) Total James Method: 659
(d) Total Stats Method: 10.3554

15. Boyer's

(a) Ken: 280
(b) Clete: 161
(c) Cloyd: 16
(d) Total James Method: 650
(e) Total Stat Method: 19.4602

16. Ferrell

(a) Wes: 233
(b) Rick: 208
(c) Total James Method: 649
(d) Total Stat Method: 15.5646

17. Mays

(a) Willie: 641
(b) Total James Method: 641
(c) Total Stat Method: 9.3242

18. Young

(a) Cy: 635
(b) Total James Method: 635
(c) Total Stat Method: 9.3106

19. Speaker

(a) Tris: 633
(b) Total James Method: 633
(c) Total Stat Method: 9.3061