

Ichiro's 262-Hit Season

On Friday, October 1, 2004, Seattle's Ichiro Suzuki smacked a ground ball up the middle and broke a record that had stood for 84 years. Ichiro's 258th hit surpassed St. Louis Browns great George Sisler's 1920 record of 257 hits in a single season. While 257 never had the ring of 60 or 714 or 4192 and has never been one of baseball's magic numbers, the record's longevity speaks for itself.

Sisler clearly had a better year in 1920 than Ichiro did in 2004, posting a batting average of .404 with an on-base percentage of .449 and a slugging percentage of .632, in contrast to Ichiro's .372 batting average, .414 on-base percentage, and .455 slugging percentage. Sisler knocked out 1.67 hits per game, playing in all 154 of the Browns games; Ichiro rapped 1.63 hits per game while playing in all but one of the Mariners 162 games. On the other hand, Ichiro did break the record while playing half his games in the best pitchers' park in the league in 2004, while Sisler had the benefit of a favorable environment for hitters at his home park in 1920. In fact, Ichiro hit .405 on the road in breaking the record in 2004, becoming the first hitter to hit .400 on the road in a season since Lou Boudreau in 1948, while Sisler hit .473 at home and .341 on the road in 1920. And there's no doubt that Ichiro faced far tougher pitching than Sisler ever did, and no one had even come close to challenging Sisler's mark since 1930. Ichiro's month-by-month hit totals and batting average are shown below (IS) alongside Sisler's 1920 (GS).

MONTH	IS H	AVG	GS H	AVG	MONTH	IS H	AVG	GS H	AVG
April	26	.255	12	.333	August	56	.463	42	.400
May	50	.400	39	.355	September	44	.373	57	.442
Jun	29	.274	60	.526	October	6	.429	7	.500
July	51	.432	40	.325	Total	262	.372	257	.407

Consecutive Games Played

It was only twenty years ago that most people considered Lou Gehrig's consecutive games played record to be unbreakable. Then ironman Cal Ripken came along and eventually surpassed Gehrig's record by a wide margin. Even Ripken's record is breakable, but it will take a unique combination of fortitude and luck to surpass it. Miguel Tejada, another shortstop, holds the longest consecutive games played streak of any active player, with 1080 consecutive games at the end of 2006. Tejada would need to play every game of the next nine seasons and 95 games of the season after that to break Cal Ripken's record.

PLAYER	GAMES	YEARS	PLAYER	GAMES	YEARS
Cal Ripken	2,632	1982-98	Miguel Tejada	1,152	(2000-07)
Lou Gehrig	2,130	1925-39	Stan Musial	895	1952-57
Everett Scott	1,307	1916-25	Eddie Yost	829	1949-55
Steve Garvey	1,207	1975-83	Gus Suhr	822	1931-37
Billy Williams	1,117	1963-70	Nellie Fox	798	1955-60
Joe Sewell	1,103	1922-30			

Four-Homer Games

Only fifteen players have hit 4 home runs in a game, and only twelve of those players did it in a regulation nine-inning game. Some great players are on the list, but there are also a few surprises: Mark Whiten, who hit only 105 home runs in his career, and Pat Seerey, who hit only 85 home runs. Carlos Delgado slugged his way onto this short list during the last week of the 2003 season.

PLAYER, TEAM	DATE
Bobby Lowe, Bos NL	May 30, 1894
Ed Delahanty, Phi NL	July 13, 1896
Lou Gehrig, NY AL	June 3, 1932
Chuck Klein, Phi NL	July 10, 1936 (10 inn)
Pat Seerey, Chi AL	July 18, 1948 G1 (11 inn)
Gil Hodges, Bro NL	Aug. 31, 1950
Joe Adcock, Mil NL	July 31, 1954
Rocky Colavito, Cle AL	June 10, 1959
Willie Mays, SF NL	Apr. 30, 1961
Mike Schmidt, Phi NL	Apr. 17, 1976 (10 inn)
Bob Horner, Atl NL	July 6, 1986
Mark Whiten, STL NL	Sept. 7, 1993 G2
Mike Cameron, Sea AL	May 2, 2002
Shawn Green, LA NL	May 23, 2002
Carlos Delgado, Tor AL	Sept. 25, 2003

Career Grand Slam Home Run Leaders

The grand slam is not just another home run; it has an identity of its own as the rarest type of home run. A grand slam usually changes the very complexion of a game since a team that's already ahead usually

has an impenetrable lead once a grand slam is hit, and a team that is behind can use a grand slam to suddenly make the game competitive again. A grand slam is by far the biggest single scoring event in any major pro sport.

Baseball fans might reasonably expect the career grand slams leaders list to look similar to the all-time home run leader list, but there are significant differences. Lou Gehrig has four more grand slams than any other player in baseball history, despite not being among the top twenty in career home runs. Some of the top home run hitters of all-time, including Barry Bonds, Frank Robinson and Sammy Sosa, have hit less than half as many grand slams as Gehrig. And several players who didn't even reach the 300-career home run mark are among the leaders in grand slams.

PLAYER	CAREER GS	PLAYER	CAREER GS	PLAYER	CAREER GS
Lou Gehrig	23	Ken Griffey Jr.	15	Ralph Kiner	13
Manny Ramirez	20	Gil Hodges	14	Ernie Banks	12
Eddie Murray	19	Mark McGwire	14	Don Baylor	12
Willie McCovey	18	Mike Piazza	14	Jason Giambi	12
Robin Ventura	18	Richie Sexson	14	Rogers Hornsby	12
Jimmie Foxx	17	Harold Baines	13	Rafael Palmeiro	12
Ted Williams	17	Albert Belle	13	Joe Rudi	12
Hank Aaron	16	Joe DiMaggio	13	Gary Sheffield	12
Dave Kingman	16	George Foster	13	Matt Williams	12
Alex Rodriguez	16	Jeff Kent	13	Rudy York	12
Babe Ruth	16				

The Single-Season Home Run Record

Widespread perception to the contrary, the major league single-season home run record has actually changed quite often over the course of baseball history. Despite all the hoopla over Mark McGwire setting the home run record in 1998, he held the mark for the shortest length of time of any individual since the 1880s.

YEAR	PLAYER, TEAM	HR	YEAR	PLAYER, TEAM	HR
1876	George Hall, Phi NL	5	1921	Babe Ruth, NY AL	59
1879	Charley Jones, Bos NL	9	1927	Babe Ruth, NY AL	60
1883	Buck Ewing, NY NL	10	1961	Roger Maris, NY AL	61
1884	Ed Williamson, Chi NL	27	1998	Mark McGwire, STL NL	70
1919	Babe Ruth, Bos AL	29	2001	Barry Bonds, SF NL	73
1920	Babe Ruth, NY AL	54			

The Home Run Records of Bonds, McGwire, Maris, and Ruth

Three years after Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa electrified the world with their great home run chase in 1998, Barry Bonds shattered the highest-profile record in sports with his 73 home runs. Babe Ruth made the home run baseball's dominant offensive stratagem in 1920 by hitting an unheard of 54 round-trippers, and The Bambino's 60 home runs in 1927 invested a unique magic in that mark.

The lists below detail the all-time home run record seasons since 1927. "Gm" indicates the team game number in which the home run was hit. Left-handed pitchers are asterisked. Pitchers who allowed multiple home runs in a game are listed only once. Dagggers after the opposing teams indicate road games.

Bonds played in 153 of the Giants 162 games in 2001. McGwire played in 155 of the Cardinals 163 games in 1998. Maris played in 161 of the Yankees 163 games in 1961. Ruth played in 151 of the Yankees 155 games in 1927.

Bonds' 73 Home Runs (2001)

HR (GM)	DATE	OFF (PITCHER/TEAM)	HR (GM)	DATE	OFF (PITCHER/TEAM)
1 (1)	Apr. 2	Woody Williams SD	23 (44)	May 21	Curt Schilling Ari [†]
2 (9)	Apr. 12	Adam Eaton SD [†]	24 (45)	May 22	Russ Springer Ari [†]
3 (10)	Apr. 13	Jamey Wright Mil [†]	25 (47)	May 24	John Thomson Col
4 (11)	Apr. 14	Jimmy Haynes Mil [†]	26 (50)	May 27	Denny Neagle* Col
5 (12)	Apr. 15	David Weathers Mil [†]	27 (53)	May 30	Robert Ellis Ari
6 (13)	Apr. 17	Terry Adams LA	28 (53)	May 30	
7 (14)	Apr. 18	Chan Ho Park LA	29 (54)	June 1	Shawn Chacon Col [†]
8 (16)	Apr. 20	Jimmy Haynes Mil	30 (57)	June 4	Bobby J. Jones SD
9 (19)	Apr. 24	Jim Brower Cin	31 (58)	June 5	Wascar Serrano SD
10 (21)	Apr. 26	Scott Sullivan Cin	32 (60)	June 7	Brian Lawrence SD
11 (24)	Apr. 29	Manny Aybar Chi	33 (64)	June 12	Pat Rapp Ana
12 (26)	May 2	Todd Ritchie Pit [†]	34 (66)	June 14	Lou Pote Ana
13 (27)	May 3	Jimmy Anderson* Pit [†]	35 (67)	June 15	Mark Mulder* Oak
14 (28)	May 4	Bruce Chen* Phi [†]	36 (67)	June 15	
15 (35)	May 11	Steve Trachsel NY	37 (70)	June 19	Adam Eaton SD [†]
16 (40)	May 17	Chuck Smith Fla [†]	38 (71)	June 20	Rodney Myers SD [†]
17 (41)	May 18	Mike Remlinger* Atl [†]	39 (74)	June 23	Darryl Kile STL [†]
18 (42)	May 19	Odalis Perez* Atl [†]	40 (89)	July 12	Paul Abbott Sea [†]
19 (42)	May 19	Jose Cabrera Atl [†]	41 (95)	July 18	Mike Hampton* Col
20 (42)	May 19	Jason Marquis Atl [†]	42 (95)	July 18	
21 (43)	May 20	John Burkett Atl [†]	43 (103)	July 26	Curt Schilling Ari [†]
22 (43)	May 20	Mike Remlinger* Atl [†]	44 (103)	July 26	