

A Tough Call

Elementary: Grades 3–4

Background Information

White Sox

The White Stockings came to Chicago in 1900 and quickly became known as the White Sox when sportswriters shortened their name. Charles Comiskey owned the team, and he was good at finding talented players. Although Comiskey made the team a success, he also made many players angry. He kept their pay low, and he even made players pay to clean their uniforms.

Comiskey Park became the home of the Chicago White Sox in 1910. The ballpark was nicknamed the "baseball palace of the world" for its modern construction. The park's famous exploding pinwheel scoreboard was added in 1960. The final game at old Comiskey was played in 1990. The new park, now called U.S. Cellular Field, opened in 1991 across the street from the site of old stadium.

Black Sox Scandal

In 1919, the Chicago White Sox, one of the best baseball teams ever, surprisingly lost the World Series to the Cincinnati Reds. Rumors quickly spread that some Sox players had taken money from gamblers to "throw" the game, to purposely lose.

Eight players went on trial in Chicago. The trial lasted for 14 days and several team members admitted in court that they had lost on purpose. Even after hearing those confessions the jury found the players not guilty. However, the new baseball commissioner wanted fans to believe that baseball was a fair game, and he thought that the players were guilty. He banned all eight players from the major leagues for life. Over the years the fascinating story of the "Black Sox" has been featured in many books and movies.

Source: *The Electronic Encyclopedia of Chicago*,
www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org