

DID YOU KNOW...?

What is the rarest feat in Major League Baseball, that has only happened once since 1876?

By Jack Bagley didyouknowcolumn@gmail.com

Well, that silly groundhog has had his say. Not that it matters, since we have six more weeks of winter regardless of whether he sees his shadow or not. I still think we need a weather rodent to tell us about summer and fall. Wouldn't it be wonderful to have some idea about planning your leisure time if you knew how much warm weather you'd have? Of course, if you're using the groundhog to plan the rest of your winter, you need more help than I can give you. Just sayin'.

Anyway, you're here for the trivia, so let's get to it! Did you know ...

... people can be almost criminally stubborn? Case in point – in 1973, a flash flood swept a bus into a river near New Delhi, India. Seventy-eight of the passengers on the bus drowned. Why? Because they belonged to two separate castes, and they refused to share the rope that would have saved all their lives.

... a lot of restaurants can be found in New York City? How many? Well, the exact number can vary depending on business and season, but the best gauge is this: if you wanted to eat a meal at every restaurant in the Big Apple, you'd need about 22.7 years, going to one different spot a day. (You could do it faster if you kept a portable stomach pump, I suppose.)

... one of the greatest composers in history was very poor at math? Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1826) never learned to multiply or divide, though he could add and subtract as needed. One website gives this example: Asked to multiply 62 by 50, Beethoven would write the number 62 down fifty times, then add the numbers together. (I suppose that's why he stopped at nine symphonies ... but what do I know?)

... people in Japan once enjoyed "sushi-flavored" KitKats™? The popular candy bar was produced in 2017 with supposedly odd flavors of sushi. But before you get ill at the thought, the flavors were simply names for the wrapper. The tuna one was actually raspberry, the seaweed-wrapped one was pumpkin pudding, and the sea urchin flavor was Hokkaido melon with mascarpone cheese. All flavors of Japanese Kit Kat candy were made with puffed rice, white chocolate, and a dash of wasabi. (All in the marketing, as they say.)

... Ohio is home to a mythical monster? The Loveland Frog Man is said to inhabit the area around the town of Loveland, Ohio. First spotted in 1955, the Frog Man has been described as a giant frog that walks on its hind legs like a human and stands about four feet tall. One observer said there were several of the creatures, and he watched them converse with one another and wave wands over their heads. (I don't know what these people actually saw, but whatever they were drinking, I don't want any.)

... the rarest feat in Major League Baseball has only happened once since 1876? You might think a perfect game is rare, and it is ... but it's been done 24 times. Losing a perfect game on the last batter? That's happened 13 times. Unassisted triple play? Pah ... been done 15 times. But what's the rarest feat? The one that has happened only one time in all of MLB history? It's this: one player hitting two grand slam home runs in the same inning. Not in one game (that's been done 13 times), but in one inning. That unique feat happened on April 23, 1999. Fernando Tatis, Sr. (born 1975), playing that day for the St. Louis Cardinals against the Los Angeles Dodgers, hit his first grand slam with the bases loaded and no one out in the third inning. The Cardinals kept the offense going that inning and, with two out and the bases loaded again, Tatis came up for the second time in that frame and belted another grand slam. Of the 11 runs that scored that inning, Tatis drove in eight. The Cardinals won the game by a score of 12 to 5. Additional trivia note: If that's not unique enough, add this: Tatis hit both of his grand slams in that inning off the same Dodger pitcher, Chan Ho Park (born 1973). (I guess they weren't managing ball games by statistics back then, or Park would've been yanked long before.)

... it's always a good idea to be able to speak other languages? The story goes that police in Ireland were at one time looking for a Polish driver called Prawo Jazdy for more than fifty driving offenses committed across the country. Later, someone advised the cops that "prawo jazdy" is Polish for driver's license. ('Nuff said.)

... the Y2K bug even scared the Federal Reserve? Not because they were worried about their computers not recognizing the new century in dates, but because they thought people might hoard money ... just in case. The Fed quietly printed an extra \$50 billion in small bills prior to the turn of the century, but when nothing happened and they found that nowhere near that much cash was necessary, most of it was recycled. (Kids, if you don't know about the Y2K bug, consult your nearest history teacher.)

... the longest wrestling match in history took more than eleven hours? During the 1912 Stockholm Olympics, two wrestlers – Martin Klein (1884-1947) of Estonia and Alfred Asikainen (1888-1942) of Finland – grappled for eleven hours and forty minutes before Klein was declared the winner. The match went on so long that Klein was too exhausted to participate in the championship match for the gold medal. (And they say wrestling is fake!)

Now ... you know!



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