Math of Games

Week 15 In-Class Journal/Study Guide for Ch. 12, Epilogue & Afterword

June 8, 2012

Jeopardy Category: Baseball Personas

1. This trio of coaches and ballplayer constitute a “revolutionary cell” within the Oakland A’s, slow to come to terms with Billy Beane’s quantitatively-driven dismissal of base-stealing as a valid offensive tactic.

2. This sabermetrician, author of The Hidden Game of Baseball, calculated that the average difference due to skill is about one run a game, while the average difference due to luck is about four runs a game.

3. This subordinate of Paul DePodesta interviewed with the Toronto Blue Jays for a GM position and got a job offer in five minutes.

4. This owner of the Boston Red Sox, enamored of the new techniques of scientific management, was the first to offer jobs “inside the club” to Bill James and Voros McCracken.

5. This hairy ball-player, first hired because of his talent for getting on base, was given the nickname “Badge” not because of a former career in law enforcement, but rather as a shortening of “Badger” after he had earned his teammates’ respect.

6. This writer for the Toronto Star tried to stir up race-based anger at the way the new management’s use of scientific recruiting principles had changed the Blue Jay’s composition (and color!).
Short Answer

1. What was Paul DePodesta’s conclusion about the reason the A’s lost their playoff game against the Twins?

2. What catchphrase, loved by baseball commentators for its nonspecific explanatory power, is contrasted with a team’s “letting the game come to them”?

3. After which pivotal season did the demand for rational baseball managers start to grow, led by owners in the mold of Paul Godfrey?

4. Why does Michael Lewis say professional baseball has “structured itself less as a business than as a social club”?

5. What are some of the arguments that “club insiders” use to discredit the rational management approach after *Moneyball*’s success with the wider public?