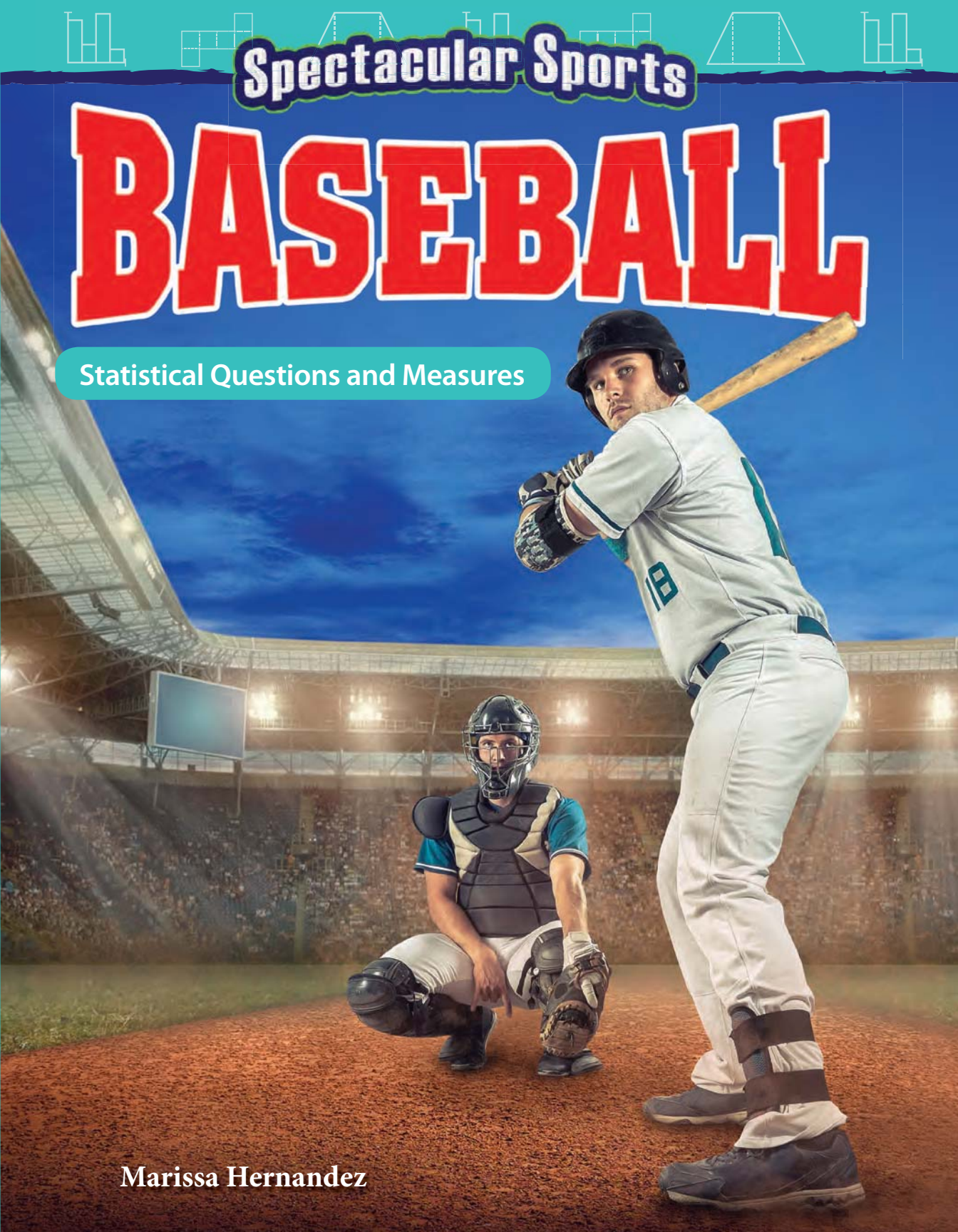
Spectacular Sports

BASEBALL

Statistical Questions and Measures



Marissa Hernandez

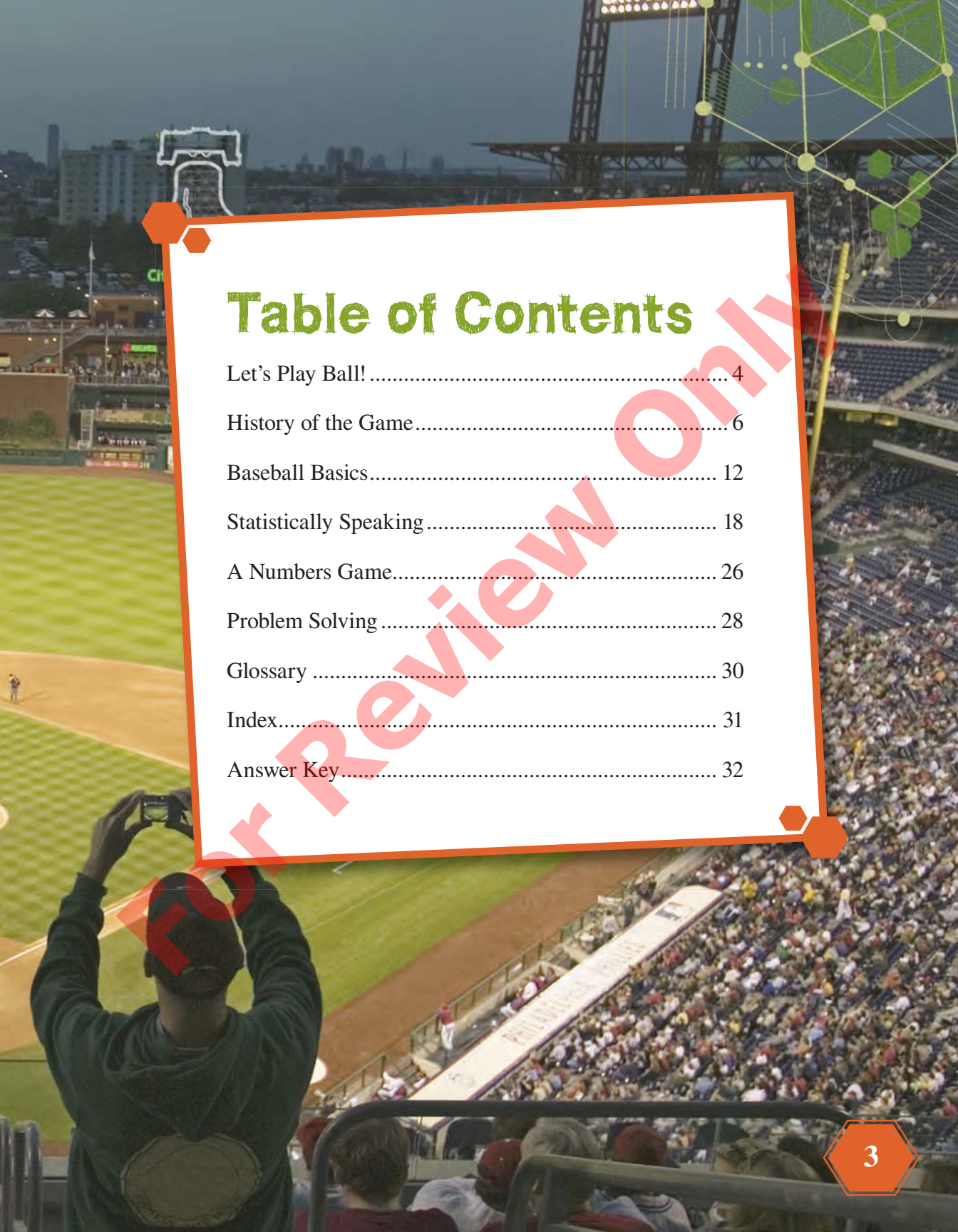


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Let's Play Ball!

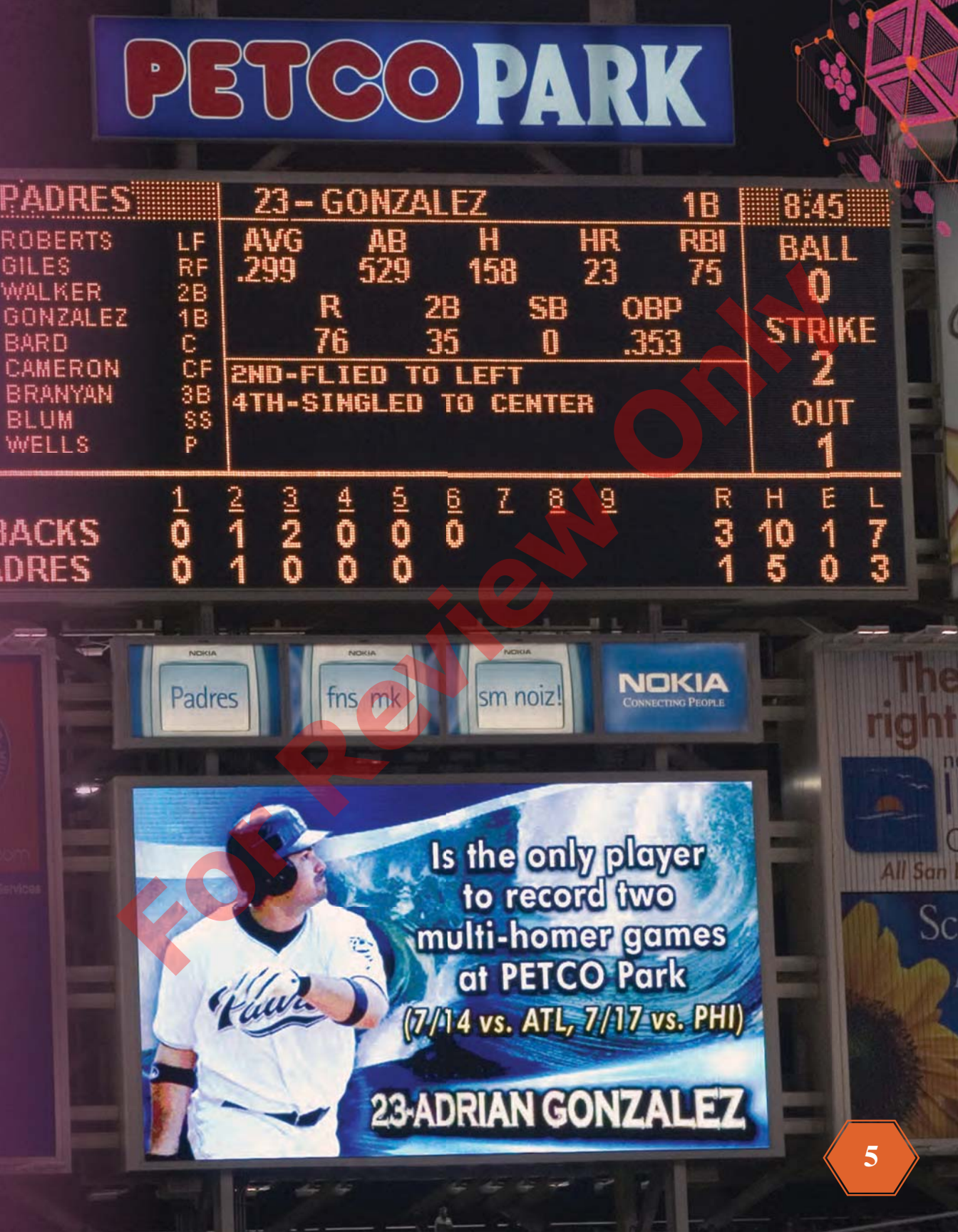
One, two, three strikes…you're **out**! Baseball is known as the all-American **pastime**. It is also a numbers game. Every part of the sport involves numbers. Four bases, three outs, double plays, singles, no-hitters—there's no escaping numbers on the baseball field.

All those numbers add up to a game of **statistics**. Everyone, from players and coaches to analysts and fans, studies the stats. Go to a ball game, and you might hear fans discussing a certain pitcher's earned run average (ERA). A great batter will have **spectators** wondering just how high their batting average (BA) will go. And the scoreboard lists even more stats for people to keep track of.

In baseball, statistics make the difference between being the star of the game and sitting on the bench. Regardless of which team or player is your favorite, to truly understand and appreciate baseball, you have to look at the numbers. So, are you ready to step up to the plate?



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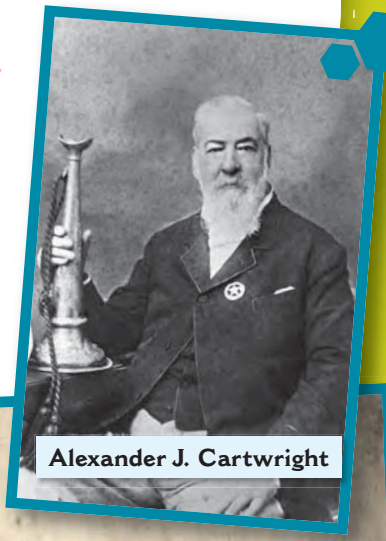


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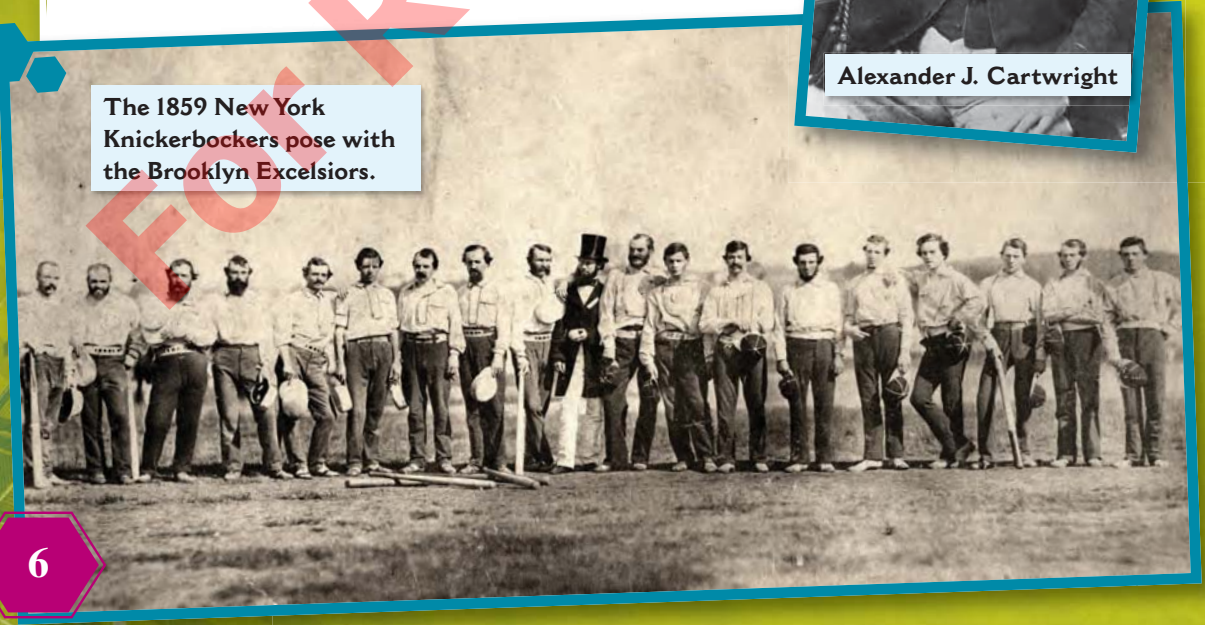
History of the Game

While baseball dates back to the 1700s, it didn't become popular until the mid-1840s. That is when a group of New York City men formed a team called the New York Knickerbocker Base Ball Club. A man named Alexander J. Cartwright was one of the players. He created a set of rules for the game, many of which still exist today. Baseball was initially played with a softer ball. That was necessary because the only way to call a runner out was to hit him with the ball! One of Cartwright's new rules was that a runner should be "tagged" with the ball instead of hit with it. The new rule led to a harder ball, which made games easier to play.

Soon, two types of baseball games emerged—the Massachusetts game (which still used the softer ball) and the New York game (which used the new, harder ball). Both versions of the game spread throughout the Northeast, with different cities choosing their style of play. Baseball was gaining popularity, but games were hard to play when teams from different areas played different styles. It took an unlikely event to thrust baseball into the spotlight. That event was the Civil War.

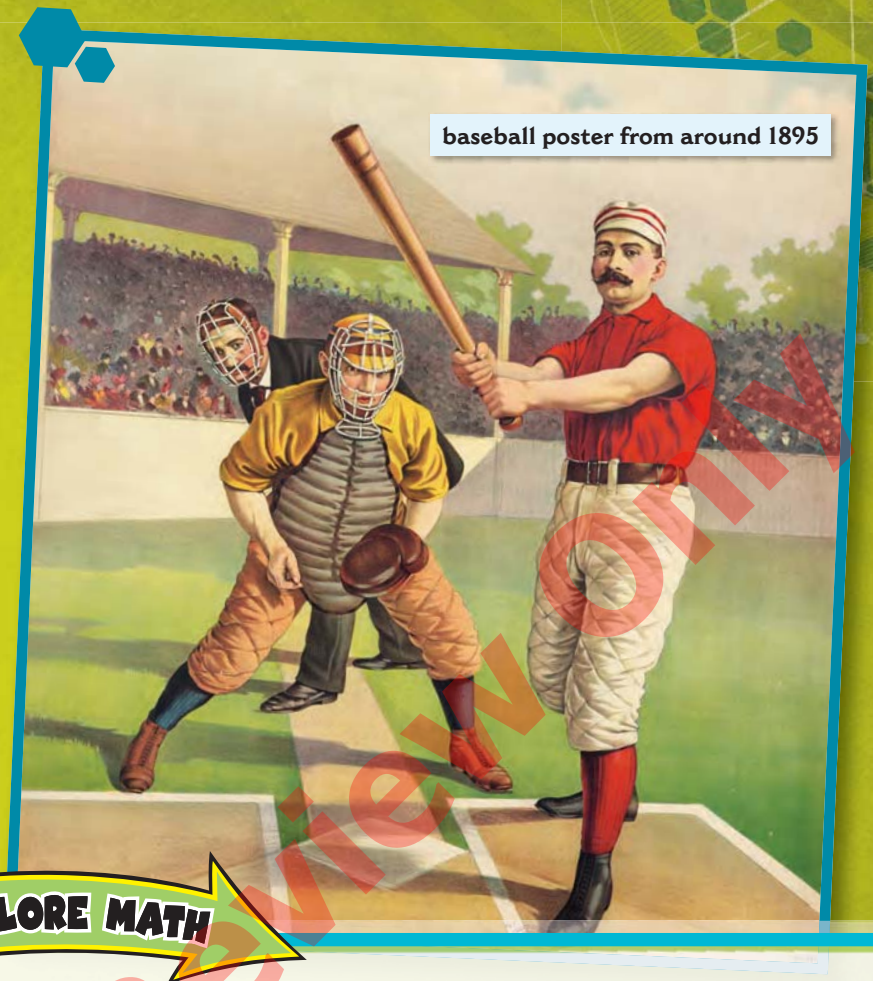


Alexander J. Cartwright



The 1859 New York Knickerbockers pose with the Brooklyn Excelsiors.

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baseball poster from around 1895

LET'S EXPLORE MATH

In the 1800s, there were two different types of baseball games—Massachusetts and New York. Draw a T-chart, and sort the questions about the different versions. Then, write your own statistical and nonstatistical questions about this era of baseball.

1. Did fans prefer the New York or Massachusetts version?
2. Did the Hoboken, New Jersey, team play with a hard ball or soft ball?
3. How many teams played the Massachusetts version?
4. Which type of ball made it more likely for a player to get on base?

Statistical Questions	Nonstatistical Questions

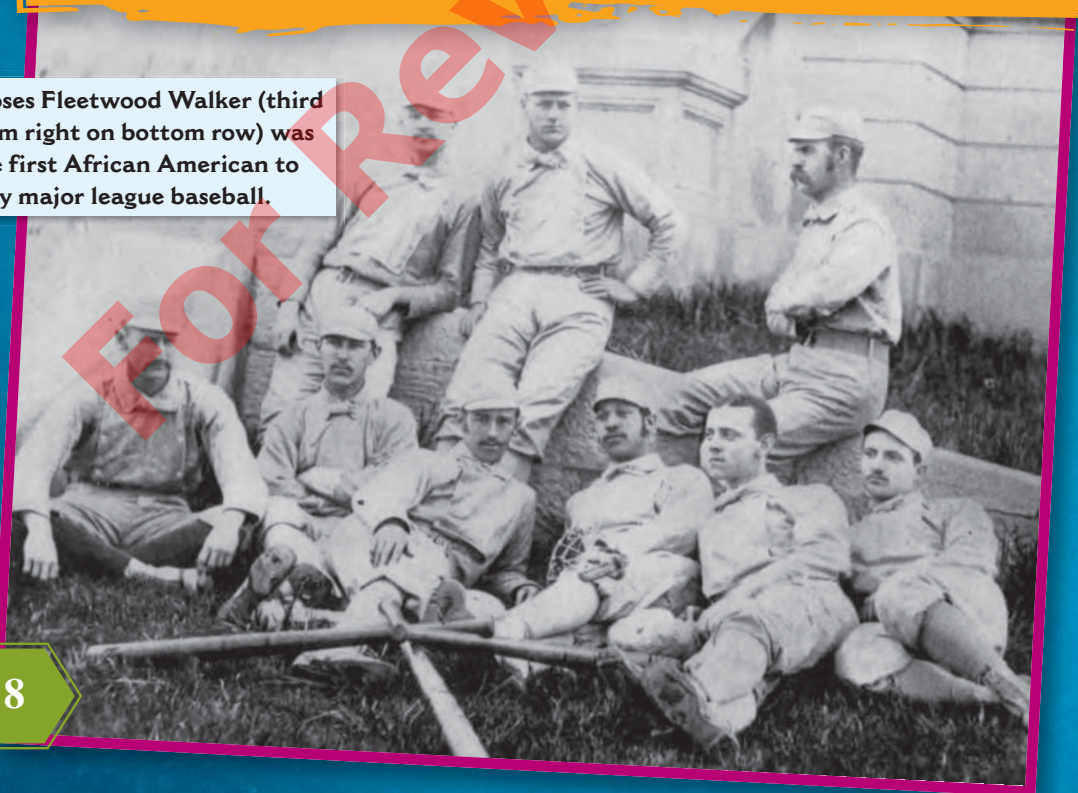
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Forming Leagues

As soldiers from the North joined together, they taught each other either the New York game or the Massachusetts game. The New York style was easier to play because soldiers simply had to find rocks to stand in as baseballs. By the end of the war, the New York game led the style of play. After the war, people moved west, taking baseball with them.

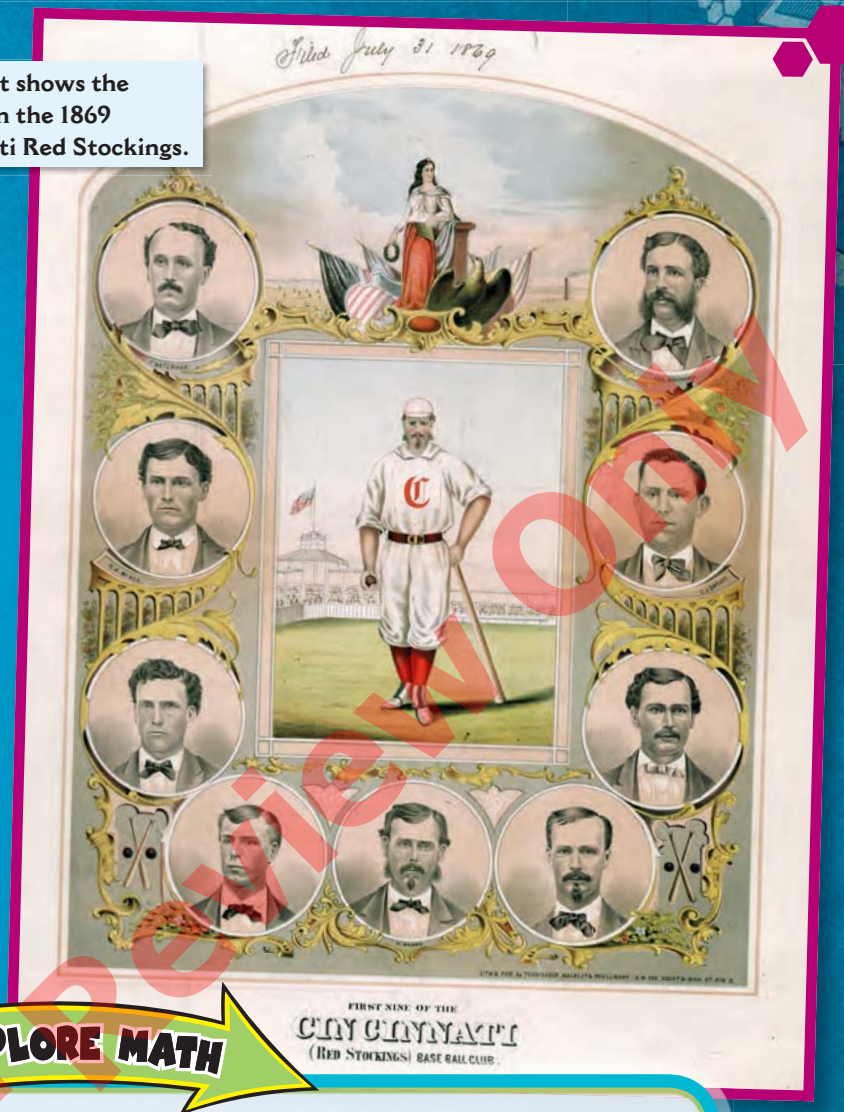
In 1869, the Cincinnati Red Stockings (later called the Cincinnati Reds) became the first professional team. Cities soon saw the appeal of having their own baseball teams. New **franchises** spread across the country. These new teams formed the National League of Professional Baseball Clubs in 1876. A few years later, the Western League was formed.

The two leagues played in harmony for the next few years. Then, the Western League asked to put teams in Baltimore and Washington, DC. The National League refused. The rejection angered the Western League teams. The Western League was renamed the American League, and the "baseball war" was on.



Moses Fleetwood Walker (third from right on bottom row) was the first African American to play major league baseball.

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This print shows the players on the 1869 Cincinnati Red Stockings.

LET'S EXPLORE MATH

Decide whether the questions are statistical or nonstatistical. Then, write related statistical questions for the nonstatistical questions.

1. What was the first professional baseball team?
2. Which league had the most players in 1895?
3. What was the typical age of baseball players in the 1870s?
4. How many spectators attended the first professional baseball game?

For Preview Only