

Records made to be broken, aren't they?

By Huel Washington

With the public's concentration on many sports, records are made and then over the years they are broken especially with the type of athletes that are competing today.

Very few people in the United States three years ago ever heard of Ichiro Suzuki, the Seattle Mariner's outfielder who recently broke one of baseball's most hallowed records, 257 hits in a single season set by George Sisler, who played for the St. Louis Browns in the 1920s.

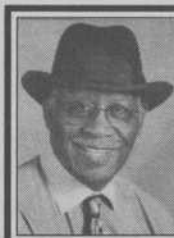
The Mariners outfielder ended the season with 262 hits in 162 games while Sisler and the league played only 154 games a season during that period.

Actually, the record for hits in 154 games still stands because Suzuki in 154 games only had 250 hits. That doesn't dim his amount of hits in a season, the teams just play more games now. Suzuki has simply surpassed the 84-year-old season's mark in a few games more.

Over the years, the accomplishments by the athletes have been phenomenal. Sometimes so great that some so-called experts have been questioning the diets and preparations of the record breakers.

However, the length of the seasons, the longevity of the athletes and the ability to keep in top condition during the season and the off season are probably the main reason records are tumbling and will continue to fall. Most of today's athletes want to be the GOAT, Greatest Of All Time."

Before the 1968 Mexico Olympics, no sprinter had broken 10 seconds for the 100 meters until Jim Hines of



SPORTS PACE

By Huel Washington

Oakland, California crossed the line in 9.95 seconds. In fact, when track experts first considered the performances of athletes, running under ten seconds for the 100 meters was regarded as a supreme effort.

Even the great Jesse Owens had run under ten seconds only on a relay with a running start. Owens won the gold in 10.3 seconds. And in 1964 Bob Hayes, a Florida football player turned Olympic sprinter, finished in 10 seconds flat. The current world record is 9.78 seconds held by Tim Montgomery.

Other marks in track and field were set as standards for athletes: the four minute mile barrier broken by Roger Bannister of England; seven feet in the high jump; 28 feet in the long jump; and 60 feet in the triple jump.

These standards have been shattered so many times by today's bigger, stronger, and more intelligent athletes that there are very few that will be standing ten years or even five years from now.

When former Chicago Bears great Walter Payton broke Cleveland Browns Jim Brown's career rushing record, he was playing 14 games in the regular season compared to Brown's National Football League career that covered only 12 games for his nine years.

Arizona Cardinals running back Emmitt Smith currently has the rushing record of 17,418 yards as he began his 21st seasons with the

Dallas Cowboys and his current employers. Smith plays a regular 16 games in a season.

For years, George Herman Ruth, (Babe), single season home run record set in 1927 was unchallenged until 1961. The record of 60 home runs stood for 34 years before being broken by Roger Maris of the New York Yankees, the same team the Babe starred on most of his career.

Maris record lasted for almost 40 years until Mark McGuire broke the record in 1999 with 70 in 1998 and Sammy Sosa hitting 68.

After McGuire's record performance, Barry Bonds of the San Francisco Giants hit 73 home runs in 2001 to take over the single season home run record.

Bonds, who reached the golden age of 40 recently, has decided to play at least another season and has hit over 703 home runs could surpass Ruth's 714 some time next season.

The career record for home runs in the United States baseball major leagues is 755 and held by Hank Aaron. Bonds could reach this record next year or in the final year of his contract with the Giants. Bonds just completed his 18-year in major league baseball.

Sadaharu Oh, who played in Japan his entire career, has the all-time record of 868 home runs for the Tokyo Giants in a 22-year career. Bond won't try to catch Oh.

With 28 feet as his goal

and a gold medal on his mind, Bob Beamon on the 1968 United Olympic team in Mexico City, jumped 29 feet two and a half inches. Mike Powell now has the record with at 29 feet four and a quarter inches. And that un-touchable seven feet high jump record that couldn't be surpassed is now held by Javier Sotomayor, who set the bar at eight feet one half inch in Spain in 1993.

Of course, Joe DiMaggio's 56 game hitting streak which has lasted since July 16, 1941 might be hard to surpass because of the type of athletes that are playing major league baseball today—but don't count it unachievable.

That's the category most baseball fans thought about Lou Gehrig's 2,130 consecutive games streak but along came Cal Ripken, Jr., who not only broke the record, he played 2,632 consecutive games.

Although many of today's athletes, especially the professionals hold their income high in their minds, being considered the best of all time or even one of the best is always in their mind. The records may be high but can be achieved. Ask Bernard

Hopkins or Jerry Rice, since they have risen to the top of their profession if they thought they could attain their present role and each would probably say, "Not in my wildest dreams."

Dreams, that is. Maurice Green has a tattoo that says it all, GOAT. Break the record and watch others try to achieve yours. Remember Pete Rose and Ty Cobbs hit record.

LEGAL NOTICES

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Issued: October 8, 2004
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3790 So. Paradise Rd. Ste. 100
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AIDS

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"Many of these people will die within the next ten years and will leave behind them more than a million orphans," De Klerk said in his speech.

De Klerk was South Africa's last white president and helped negotiate his National Party — which created apartheid — out of more than four decades of power, opening the door to democracy and the country's first all-race elections in 1994.

He shared the Nobel Prize with former President Nelson Mandela for his efforts.

"Sadly, nobody foresaw the AIDS pandemic or imag-

ined that within 20 years some six million South Africans would have died of this new and terrible disease," he told delegates at the annual meeting.

He said the second most serious problem facing South Africans was poverty and the widening gap between the rich and the poor and the link between crime and unemployment.

"Despite the government's best efforts almost half the population [most of them Black] now lives below the poverty line," De Klerk said. "...Whites still own the big houses; they still hold down the best jobs; they still drive

the fancy cars and still own more than 80 percent of the country's farmland."

"We are still very far from achieving the human dignity, the equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms for all proclaimed in the first article of our constitution," he said.

De Klerk has stepped out of political life and now heads the F.W. De Klerk Foundation.

