

By Mark Patterson

Pro baseball needs a change

Nine games into the 1978 baseball season I think it's about time to bring up the old argument about realigning the baseball divisions in the major leagues.

With emphasis in professional sports on profit, one way that the professional baseball teams could up their draw at the gates would be to offer greater rivalries within geographic areas. Of course, a fan may argue that there are some great rivalries in existence today, but just imagine the ones that could be formed.

Just think of the New York Mets battling with the New York Yankees for the divisional crown. Or the

Chicago Cubs going head-to-head with the Chicago White Sox throughout the season. And all the California teams in the same division.

It would be a great boost at the gate for the teams that occupy the same geographic area. Instead of battling and competing for the same fans the two teams would work together. Of course, the scheduling would become more complicated, arranging the teams so they don't conflict, but the extra work might be well worth it.

But for a new alignment to function without a hitch, the professional leagues would have to expand into two more cities. It's been pro-

posed that Denver and Washington D.C. (or New Orleans) could gain new teams. If so, the divisions would expand to seven teams each. With a balance of teams in each division, scheduling could also be more balanced.

There would still be two separate leagues along with four different divisions. And here's how the season's games could be scheduled. Each team would play five games at home and five on the road with each team in its division for a total of 60 games within its division.

Then each team would play three games at home and three of on the road with each inter-division team

for a total of 42 games. And to complete the schedule, each team would play two games at home and two on the road with each team in the other league.

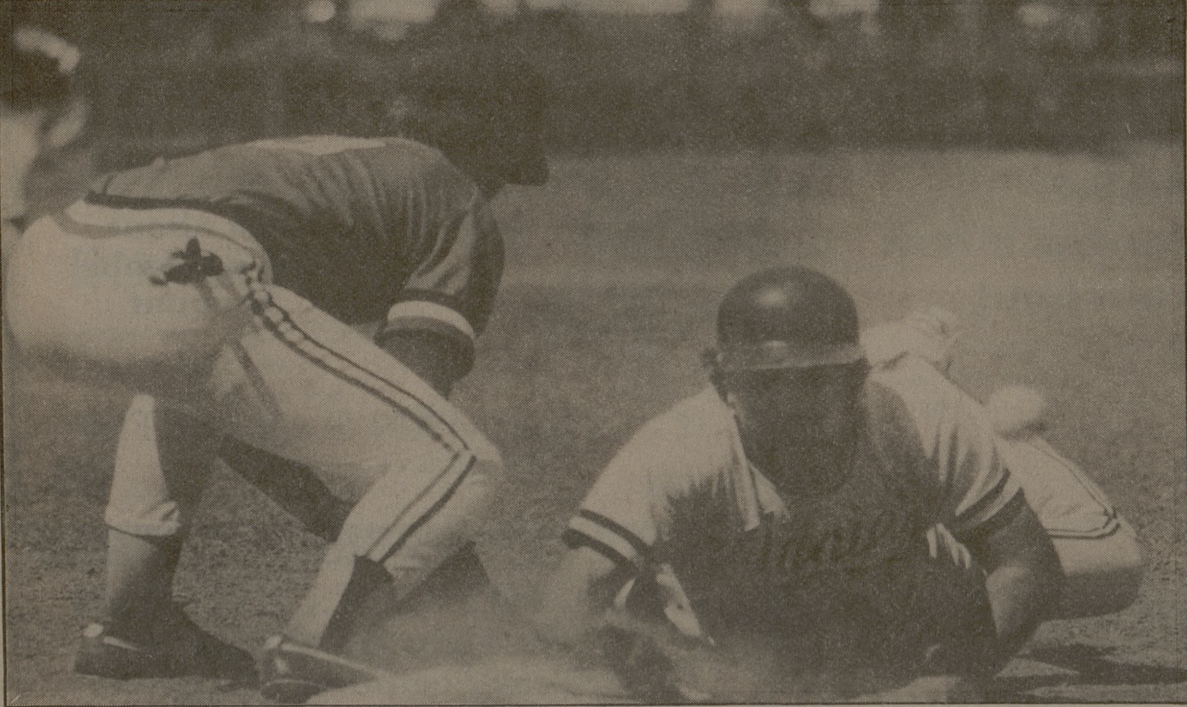
With this scheduling procedure, there would be 158 regular season games. That is four games less than the present total but the fans in each city would have the chance to see every major league team and every player.

I might add that the playoff and World Series format would need to be changed to satisfy the new arrangement.

Although traveling to all the cities within the major leagues might add to the travel costs for each team, the money that is saved from the travel within the divisions would offset the added expenses and possibly lessen the overall travel costs for an entire season.

Eastern Division
New York Yankees
New York Mets
Boston
Philadelphia
Pittsburgh
Montreal
Toronto
Central Division
Chicago Cubs
Chicago White Sox
Milwaukee
Minnesota
Cincinnati
Cleveland
Detroit

Southern Division
Texas
Houston
Atlanta
Kansas City
St. Louis
Baltimore
Washington D.C.
Western Division
Los Angeles
California
San Francisco
Oakland
San Diego
Seattle
Denver



Back in time

Texas A&M's Steve Robinson dives safely back to first base as the ball gets away from SMU's Rick Ceer on a pick-off play. The Aggies defeated the Mustangs twice in the

three-game series last weekend. A&M remains one game behind league-leading Arkansas.

Battalion photo by David Boggan



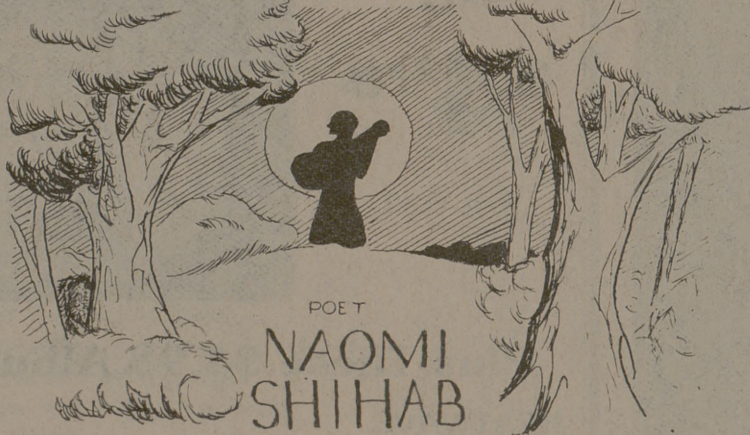
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