



PROJECT MUSE®

Sam Nahem: The Right-Handed Lefty Who Integrated Military
Baseball in World War II

Peter Dreier

NINE: A Journal of Baseball History and Culture, Volume 26, Numbers 1-2,
Fall-Spring 2017-2018, pp. 184-215 (Article)

Published by University of Nebraska Press
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/nin.2017.0025>



➔ *For additional information about this article*
<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/758617>

Sam Nahem

*The Right-Handed Lefty Who Integrated
Military Baseball in World War II*

PETER DREIER

Sam Nahem was a so-so pitcher who logged a 10-8 win-loss record and a 4.69 earned run average (ERA) in four partial seasons with the Dodgers, Cardinals and Phillies between 1938 and 1948.

Despite this unremarkable record, Nahem was a remarkable Major Leaguer in many ways. He was the only Syrian and one of the few Jews in the Majors during that period. Nahem not only had a college education—a rarity among big league players at the time—but during off-seasons he also earned a law degree, which he viewed as his fallback job in case his baseball career faltered. He was also an intellectual who loved classical music and American, Russian, and French literature.

He was also one of the few—and possibly the only—big league pitcher who threw exclusively overhand to left-handed batters and exclusively side-arm to right-handed hitters. In his Major League Baseball (MLB) career, he was inconsistent—occasionally brilliant, but mostly unexceptional—on the mound.

Nahem was a right-handed pitcher with left-wing politics. He may have been the only Major Leaguer during his day who was a member of the Communist Party (CP). After his playing days were over, Nahem worked for twenty-five years in a chemical plant where he became a union leader. During the Cold War, his political activities caught the attention of the FBI, which put Nahem under surveillance.

But most important in terms of his baseball career, Nahem was key player in a little-known episode in the battle to desegregate baseball. Like many other radicals in the 1930s and 1940s, Nahem fervently believed that baseball should be racially integrated. While serving in the army during World War II, he challenged the military's racial divide by organizing, managing, and playing for an integrated team that won the US military championship series in Europe in

September 1945, a month before Jackie Robinson signed a contract with the Dodgers that broke MLB's color bar.

EARLY DAYS

Samuel Ralph Nahem's parents—Isaac Nahem and Emilie (nee Sitt) Nahem—immigrated to America from Aleppo, Syria in 1912. Born in New York City on October 19, 1915, Nahem, one of eight siblings, grew up in a Brooklyn enclave of Syrian Jews. He spoke Arabic before he learned English.

Nahem demonstrated his rebellious streak early on. When he was thirteen, Nahem reluctantly participated in his Bar Mitzvah ceremony, but refused to continue with Hebrew school classes after that because "it took me away from sports." To further demonstrate his rebellion, that year he ended his Yom Kippur fast an hour before sundown. Recalling the incident, he called it "my first revolutionary act."¹

The next month—on November 12, 1928—Nahem's father, a well-to-do importer-exporter, traveling on a business trip to Argentina, was one of over one hundred passengers who drowned when a British steamship, the *Vestris*, sank off the Virginia coast.

Within a year, the Great Depression had arrived, throwing the country into turmoil. With his father dead, Nahem's family could have fallen into destitution. "But fortunately we sued the steamship company and won enough money to live up to our standard until we were grown and mostly out of the house," Nahem recalled. He remembered how, at age fourteen, he "used to haul coal from our bin to relatives who had no heat in the bitterly cold winters of New York." So, despite his family's own relative comfort, "I was quite aware of the misery all around." That reality, Nahem remembered, "led to my embracing socialism as a rational possibility."²

BROOKLYN COLLEGE: ATHLETICS AND ACTIVISM

Education was Nahem's ticket out of that insular community and into the wider world of sports and politics. While Nahem was still a teenager, an older cousin, Ralph Sutton, as well as his younger brother Joe and first cousin Joe Cohen, exposed him to radical political ideas. Sutton also mentored Nahem to appreciate Shakespeare and classical music.

In 1933, in the midst of the Depression, Nahem entered Brooklyn College, whose campus was a hotbed of political radicalism and activism. It was part of the taxpayer-funded City College system, which was known as the "poor man's Harvard." At the time, many of its students came from working class, immi-

grant Jewish families. Students espoused every variety of radical ideas, including anarchism, socialism, and communism. Having already been attracted to the CP by his cousin Ralph, Sam was soon participating in its campus activities.

Nahem was better off economically than most of his fellow students, but he quickly absorbed the campus' leftist political atmosphere while, as an English major, immersing himself in his love of literature.

Although a brilliant student and a committed, idealistic activist, it was on the athletic field that Nahem really stood out. As a teenager, Nahem played baseball and football on Brooklyn's sandlot teams because he didn't make the teams at New Utrecht High School. He started off as a catcher but shifted to pitching when he began wearing glasses because they couldn't fit beneath the catcher's mask.³ He quickly grew in size, reaching 6'1" and 190 pounds in college at a time when the average adult male was 5'8" tall.⁴ At Brooklyn College he became a top-flight athlete, pitching for the baseball team and playing full-back on its football team.

During his freshman year, Nahem recalled, "I really emerged as a personality, different from the shy, unaggressive, and, yes, uninteresting (but handsome) boy I was." Nahem began dating girls and excelled in his English classes, where he was often the teacher's pet, "especially since I was an athletic hero." "I do recall the interest I awakened in my professors by my feats. 'He throws a good curve and understands modern poetry! He knows how to use big words!'" He was drawn to Russian and French literature as well as such American writers as Hemingway, Faulkner, Dreiser, and Jack London.⁵

The *New York Times*, the *Brooklyn Eagle*, and other daily papers frequently reported on Nahem's exploits on the gridiron and the diamond. "Who can deny a certain thrill in seeing one's name in print?" Nahem recalled years later.⁶ In the spring of 1935, following a good football season, Nahem was back in the news as Brooklyn College's ace hurler. "Nahem Stars on the Mound and at Bat," the *Times* headlined its April 26, 1935 story, reporting that he not only defeated Fordham University by a 3-2 margin, but, batting fourth in the line-up, he also got two hits and scored Brooklyn College's first run.

GETTING INTO PRO BALL

At the end of his junior year, Nahem earned a tryout with the hometown Brooklyn Dodgers, managed by Casey Stengel. Nahem told two versions of how he earned a Dodger contract.

"One morning when I was pitching batting practice he (Stengel) grabbed a

bat and got up there to hit against me,” Nahem recalled. “Maybe it was because I looked easy to hit. I bore down hard, and Casey didn’t get the ball out of the infield. So he promoted me—from morning batting practice pitcher to afternoon batting practice pitcher!”⁷ In another rendition, Nahem recollected, “I was throwing batting practice and an errant fastball hit this famous Okie pitcher, Van Lingle Mungo, in the ass. After the tryout, Stengel put his arm around me and said, ‘We’ll sign you up. If you can hurt that big lard-ass, you must have something on the ball.’”⁸

When Nahem told his mother that he was going to play professional baseball, she asked, “When are you going to quit those kid jobs and get a job?”

“I said, ‘I’m making \$100 a week,’” Nahem recalled. “She said, ‘Go play!’”⁹

Nahem dropped out of college to play professional baseball.¹⁰ The Dodgers sent him to their Minor League Baseball (MiLB) franchise in Allentown, Pennsylvania (in the Class D New York-Pennsylvania league) for the 1935 season. That winter Nahem began attending St. John’s University’s law school during his off seasons. He earned his law degree and passed the bar in December 1938.¹¹

In 1936 the Dodgers sent Nahem to another Class D team in Jeanerette, Louisiana (in the Evangeline League).¹² In 1937 the Dodgers promoted him to their Clinton, Iowa team in the B-level Iowa-Indiana-Illinois league, where he had an outstanding season, pitching in twenty-one games, winning fifteen games, losing only five, and making the league’s All-Star team.¹³ In 1938, the Dodgers advanced him to their A-level Elmira, New York team, where he had a 9-7 record.

On September 28, the *New York Times* reported that “Sam Nahem, south-paw [*sic*]¹⁴ hurler for Elmira and formerly of Brooklyn College, reported to the Dodgers yesterday.” A few days later, October 2, the last day of the 1938 season, the twenty-two-year old Nahem made his MLB debut. He pitched a complete game to beat the Phillies 7-3 at Shibe Park in Philadelphia on just six hits. He also got two hits in five at bats and drove in a run, thus ending the season with a .400 batting average.¹⁵

Despite his stellar debut, the next year the Dodgers sent him back to the minors. He began the 1939 season playing for the Montreal Royals, where he won one game and lost three. Burleigh Grimes, a Hall of Fame pitcher who was Nahem’s manager with Montreal, taught him how to throw a slider. At the time, Nahem was one of the few hurlers who used that pitch, which he described as “halfway between a fastball and a curve.”¹⁶ In July, the Dodgers assigned Nahem to their Nashville Volunteers team. The Dodgers brought Nahem back to Brooklyn at the end of August but didn’t send him to the

mound, and he was back in Nashville within a few weeks. He won eight games and lost six games for the Volunteers. The *Times* called him “Nashville’s ace hurler, Solemn Sam Nahem.”¹⁷

As the Dodgers spring training got underway in Florida in February 1940, the *Times* wrote that Nahem “the St. John’s University Law School graduate, is rated a great pitching prospect.”¹⁸ That same month, in a profile of Nahem, *New York Post* sportswriter Stanley Frank called him “the very jewel of a rookie” (even though he had pitched for the Dodgers in 1938). Frank quoted Dodgers manager Leo Durocher saying, “I remember him [Nahem] well. Big and strong with a great fastball, but it didn’t do much.” Frank then quoted Nahem, rebutting Durocher’s assessment: “It does now. It sinks when I’m good, but my best pitch is that slider. I didn’t have it when the Dodgers last saw me.”¹⁹

Despite Nahem’s bravado, he pitched poorly during spring training. In one game, in what can only be viewed as an act of cruelty, Durocher allowed Nahem to face nineteen batters and give up thirteen runs in the ninth inning before taking him out.²⁰

An article in the *Nashville Tennessean* in March, while he was at spring training in Florida, reported that Nahem was thinking of returning to New York to open up a law practice with his brother Joe.²¹ Nahem’s ambivalence about this pro baseball career was tested when, after spring training, the Dodgers assigned him to back to their AA level Nashville farm team instead of their top MiLB franchise in Montreal. Nahem apparently wasn’t eager to return there. “I would go to Nashville outright,” Nahem told the *Times*, “but I now go back there on option. I made good there once, and if I can’t advance in baseball there’s no point in my remaining in the game. I definitely will quit baseball if some other disposition of me is not made.”²²

Instead, Nahem arranged to be optioned to another AA level team, the Louisville Colonels, a Red Sox farm team in the American Association (where he was 3-5 with a 4.43 ERA).²³ Even though he was playing for a team affiliated with the Red Sox, baseball’s reserve clause guaranteed that he remained the Dodgers’ property.

Whether or not Nahem’s resistance played a role, in June 1940 the Dodgers traded him (and three other players, along with \$100,000) to the St. Louis Cardinals organization in a deal that sent star outfielder Joe Medwick to Brooklyn.²⁴ The Cardinals assigned Nahem to their Texas League team, the Houston Buffaloes. During the second half of the season, Nahem pitched in fifteen games for Houston (ten of them complete games) and posted an 8-6 win-loss record with a league-leading 1.65 ERA in 104 innings. Nahem won two games (including a four-hit shutout) against the Oklahoma City Indians,

then split two games with the Beaumont Exporters to give Houston the Texas League championship. In the Dixie Series—pitting the Texas League and Southern Association champions—Nahem lost two games against his former team, the Nashville Volunteers.²⁵

The Cardinals brought Nahem up to the big-league club the following season. They paid him \$3,200²⁶ (about \$55,000 in today's dollars). Cardinals general manager Branch Rickey had a "heart to heart" talk with Nahem that helped restore his confidence. According to Nahem, Rickey told him that "he had faith in me. What a psychologist he is! He said I was his boy, and he was picking me to make good. He told me I would pitch well the rest of the season, and darned if I didn't."²⁷

Nahem recalled that when he joined the Cardinals in 1941, "I got a new concept of pitching" by watching his teammate Lon Warneke, an outstanding veteran. "I saw that it wasn't like how I pitched them: High, low, inside, outside. He threw low and inside, high and outside. He threw inside and he threw outside. This farmer had a theory of pitching far more complicated than me, a law school graduate and bar-passer first crack. And his theory was really fascinating. Balance is everything in hitting, and if you can get the guy just a tip off balance, that really does something."²⁸

Discussing Nahem, Dodger outfielder Roy Cullenbine told the *Brooklyn Eagle*: "With that sidearm delivery of his, he fools you. His fastball is on top of the plate before you think he's let go of the ball. Besides he's big and with that sidearm motion he somehow manages to fire the ball at you with his uniform for a background. He's tough."²⁹ Cardinals catcher Gus Mancuso told the *Sporting News*: "Nahem is not a speed-ball pitcher like these others, but he has a better all-round variety of stuff, and fine control. He can pitch to spots, and he is smart. His slider is a real humdinger."³⁰ Nahem credited Mancuso with being a big help. "I owe my steadiness and confidence to him," Nahem told the *Brooklyn Eagle*.³¹

In his first starting assignment for the Cardinals, on April 23, 1941, Nahem showed great promise. He pitched a three-hitter, beating the Pittsburgh Pirates 3–1, striking out three and giving up only one walk. The *Times* called it "the Redbirds' best hurling performance of the season."³²

That victory was "the greatest game I ever pitched in my whole career," Nahem recalled many years later. "Tell me about heaven."³³ Explaining his accomplishment, Nahem said that the Cardinals had five rookie pitchers competing for two slots on the roster. "There's something in the blood that inspired me in certain moments."³⁴

A week later, on April 30, Nahem gave up only one hit in seven innings against the New York Giants and won his second game in a row.³⁵

On May 30, against the Cincinnati Reds, Nahem gave up only seven hits and two runs in nine innings, but after nine innings the score was tied 2-2 and manager Billy Southworth replaced Nahem with reliever Ira Hutchinson, who gave up a run in the thirteenth inning and took the loss.³⁶ On July 5, he faced the Reds again. He pitched a complete game, giving up only six hits and two runs (one of them unearned), but he lost to the Reds' ace Johnny Vander Meer, who allowed the Phillies only one run.³⁷

Against the Giants at the Polo Grounds on June 7, Nahem gave up three runs in the first two innings before being removed for a reliever. As the *Times* reported, "Sam Nahem, the Brooklyn barrister, was chased back to his law books in less than two rounds."³⁸

During the 1941 season, Nahem started eight games and relieved in eighteen. He won five games before losing two. He pitched eighty-one innings and registered a 2.98 ERA, the tenth best in the National League (NL). Despite this excellent performance, in August the Cardinals shipped Nahem to their AA MiLB team in Columbus, Ohio. Again, Nahem voiced his objections to being sent to the minors. "I am not reporting [to Columbus]," he told the Columbus team president Al Banister, according to a newspaper story. But he soon "cooled off," the paper reported. "realizing his career was at stake."³⁹ He pitched five games at Columbus, went 0-2, and had a disastrous 9.41 ERA.

On February 19, 1942, the Cardinals sold Nahem to the Phillies. That season he made thirty-five appearances for the Phillies, posting a 1-3 win-loss record and a 4.94 ERA. After the season was over, Nahem joined the military. It looked like his pro baseball career was over, but he would have a brief encore in 1948.

A LITERARY LEFTY

During his eleven years playing pro ball—interrupted by World War II and several seasons with a semi-pro team—Nahem spent more time in the Minors than in the Majors. He had a 44-24 record in the Minors, not counting his first two years in Allentown and Jeanerette, for which there are no available records.

Nahem described the minors as "hot dusty bush leagues" characterized by "long night bus travel, small crowds, crummy food, small time love affairs." He dealt with the boredom and isolation by reading.

"I read my way through those years. What does one do in Columbus, Ohio for the summer? The complete works of Honoré de Balzac. What about Jeanerette, Louisiana? Of course, the complete works of Theodore Dreiser."⁴⁰

Nahem would sometimes bring his books into the dugout. He'd quote

Shakespeare and Guy de Maupassant in the middle of conversations. News stories about Nahem frequently emphasized his education, his legal training, and erudition as well as his glasses.

After he was assigned to the Montreal Royals, one newspaper reported: “Montreal fans will find Sam Nahem, one of the Royals’ new pitchers, unusually interesting. He speaks French.”⁴¹ During spring training in 1940, an Associated Press reporter wrote: “Sam wears spectacles and talks less like a ballplayer than any diamond star this reporter knows. For reading material Nahem does not devote his time to pulp magazines—the Westerns, Adventure stories and whatnot—but goes for the realistic Russians, Dostoevski, Gorki, Chekov, and Tolstoi.”⁴² Nahem clearly enjoyed his reputation as a highbrow hurler, telling the reporter: “I am a great believer in psychology and I admire the Russian outlook on life. On those days when my pitching has been horrible I lost myself in the Russian classics. I read much more when things are going bad for me than when I’m winning.”

But Nahem insisted that “My heart is wrapped up in making good in the majors. Of course, if I don’t, I’ll always have something to fall back on and even if I make good in the big show I can’t last forever and when I’m washed up my law will be good to fall back on.”⁴³

Another Associated Press story the next year, when Nahem was trying to make the Cardinals’ roster, began: “Bespectacled Sam Nahem is a scholarly gent” and “a full-fledged attorney who can spiel 50-cent words in several languages and likes nothing better than a good argument with a rival batsman or on the relative importance of environment and heredity.”⁴⁴ Nahem’s “[b]lack hair curling back over his high forehead gives him a professorial air, accentuated by the glasses he wears,” wrote the *Brooklyn Eagle*’s respected sports columnist Tommy Holmes, adding that with Nahem’s law degree from St. John’s, “the Dodgers have actually come up with a clubhouse lawyer.”⁴⁵ Throughout Nahem’s career, newspapers routinely referred to his bald head. He took it all in stride. “Euphemistically, I could say I had hair, but euphemistically,” he once said.⁴⁶

Though better-educated than most other players, Nahem was gregarious and extroverted, with a boisterous sense of humor, which made him popular with his teammates. But occasionally Nahem’s background impeded his relationships with other players. He once recalled:

Andy Seminick [the Phillies’ catcher] really put me in my place once. He once said to me: “Sam, we all know that you went to college and that you’re a lawyer from New York. For heaven’s sakes, Sam, I come from a coal mining family. Then I realized that I had a condescending attitude toward them. It was arrogant of me. That wasn’t right

because everybody is interesting in their own way and I hadn't been pursuing that. So I was well chastised."⁴⁷

"It was almost detrimental to him at that age. He was almost too bookish for the jocks he was around," explained his son Ivan. "He might have gone further [in baseball] if it weren't for his bookishness, but that's who he was." "I remember my dad said once he couldn't understand James Joyce, and that was inconceivable to me. He was so well-read," Ivan told a reporter.⁴⁸

Nahem once recalled that, "I wasn't a natural woman-hunter, and most players, even the successfully married ones, were skirt-chasers, they really were. I wasn't too happy at that. [But] the class of women in the big leagues was higher than in the minor leagues. That was another reason to aspire to the big leagues."⁴⁹

Few of Nahem's MiLB teammates had ever met a New Yorker before. Someone gave him the nickname "Subway Sam," which lasted throughout his baseball career.

Nahem enjoyed the physical and psychological aspects of being a good athlete, but, he recalled, "when I became political and radicalized I tried to think of sports in political and social terms."⁵⁰

Nahem had to deal with anti-Semitism among his teammates and other players. "I was aware I was a Jewish player and different from them. There were very few Jewish players at the time," Nahem said. (There were ten Jews on MLB rosters in 1938, Nahem's rookie year). "I don't blame the other players at all. Many of them came from where they probably had never met a Jewish person. You know, they subscribed to that anti-Semitism that was latent throughout the country. I fought it whenever I appeared . . . Much of it was implicit: Jews and money, Jews and selfishness." To combat the stereotypes, "I especially made sure I tipped as much or more than any other player."⁵¹

As a left-wing radical and a Jew who faced anti-Semitic bigotry, Nahem was sympathetic to the plight of African Americans.

"I was in a strange position," he explained. "The majority of my fellow ballplayers, wherever I was, were very much against black ballplayers, and the reason was economic and very clear. They knew these guys had the ability to be up there and they knew their jobs were threatened directly and they very, very vehemently did all sorts of things to discourage black ballplayers."⁵² His views were particularly selfless, because as a marginal player he was more likely than a real star to be replaced by a black pitcher.

Nahem talked to some of his teammates to encourage them to be more open-minded. "I did my political work there," he told an interviewer years later. "I would take one guy aside if I thought he was amiable in that respect

and talk to him, man to man, about the subject. I felt that was the way I could be most effective.”⁵³

“That’s why he was so political,” his daughter Joanne explained. “He believed that people deserved more, so he had a great faith in humanity.”⁵⁴

It is not surprising that Nahem was attracted to the CP.⁵⁵ From the 1920s through the 1940s, the CP—although never even approaching one hundred thousand members—had a disproportionate influence in progressive and liberal circles. It attracted many idealistic Americans—including many Jews and African Americans—who were concerned about economic and racial injustice. In the US, the CP took strong stands for unions and women’s equality and against racism, anti-Semitism, and emerging fascism in Europe. It sent organizers to the Jim Crow South to organize sharecroppers and tenant farmers and was active in campaigns against lynching, police brutality, and Jim Crow laws. The CP led campaigns to stop landlords from evicting tenants and to push for unemployment benefits. In Harlem, it helped launch the “Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work” campaign, urging consumers to boycott stores that refused to hire African-American employees.⁵⁶

The cause of baseball’s color line was a natural for the CP. It was no accident that Lester Rodney, sports editor of the CP-sponsored newspaper, the *Daily Worker*, was one of the leading figures in the effort to integrate baseball. Beginning in the 1930s, CP, along with the Negro press, civil rights groups, progressive white activists, and radical politicians waged a sustained campaign to integrate baseball. The coalition included some unlikely allies who disagreed about political ideology but found common ground in challenging baseball’s Jim Crow. They believed that if they could push baseball to dismantle its color line, they could make inroads in other facets of American society. In 1938, the CP-led American Youth Congress passed a resolution censuring the MLB for its exclusion of black players. In 1939, New York State Sen. Charles Perry, who represented Harlem, introduced a resolution that condemned baseball for discriminating against black ballplayers. In 1940 leftist sports editors from college newspapers in New York adopted a similar resolution. Black sportswriters—particularly Wendell Smith of the *Pittsburgh Courier* and Sam Lacy of the *Baltimore Afro-American*—made baseball part of a larger crusade to confront Jim Crow laws. After the US entered World War II in 1941 Negro papers enthusiastically supported the “Double V” campaign—victory over fascism overseas and over racism at home.

For several years, left-wing unions marched in May Day parades with “End Jim Crow in Baseball” signs. On July 7, 1940, the Trade Union Athletic Association, comprised of thirty left-wing unions, held an “End Jim Crow in Baseball” demonstration at the New York World’s Fair. Progressive unions

and civil rights groups picketed outside Yankee Stadium, the Polo Grounds, and Ebbets Field in New York City, and Comiskey Park and Wrigley Field in Chicago to demand an end to baseball's color line. In June 1942, large locals of several major unions, including the United Auto Workers and the National Maritime Union, as well as the New York Industrial Union Council of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), sent resolutions to Baseball Commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis demanding an end to baseball segregation. That December, ten leaders of the CIO, the progressive union federation, went to the winter meetings of baseball's executives at Chicago's Ambassador East Hotel to demand that MLB recruit black players, but Landis refused to meet with them.⁵⁷ In December 1943, the publisher of the *Chicago Defender*, a leading black newspaper, arranged for the well-known actor, singer and activist Paul Robeson to head a delegation (that included Wendell Smith) to meet with Landis and MLB owners at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York City. Robeson told them: "The time has come when you must change your attitude toward Negroes. . . . Because baseball is a national game, it is up to baseball to see that discrimination does not become an American pattern. And it should do this this year."⁵⁸

It is unlikely that Nahem actively participated in many of these protests, since he was playing pro baseball and attending law school during the off-season. He was probably the only CP member on a professional baseball roster, but none of the profiles about him during his playing days referred to his left-wing politics. It is possible that he didn't discuss his political ideas with reporters, or perhaps they liked him enough to keep his controversial views out of their stories. As Nahem recalled, "The sportswriters liked me a lot, since no matter what, I always had some cliché I could twist around for them."⁵⁹ He was well-educated, articulate and quotable, and had a quick wit. For example, when a sportswriter asked him about his lackluster performance during spring training in 1940, Nahem replied, "I am now in the egregiously anonymous position of pitching batting practice to the batting practice pitchers."⁶⁰ When a radio interviewer asked him how to say "Merry Christmas" in Arabic, Nahem responded with the name of a Syrian cheese omelet.⁶¹

PLAYING BASEBALL AND BATTLING BIGOTRY IN WWII

During World War II, the American military ran a robust baseball program at home and overseas. President Franklin Roosevelt believed it would help soldiers stay in shape and boost the country's morale. Many professional players were in the military, so the quality of play was often excellent. After Germany surrendered in May 1945, the military expanded its baseball

program while American troops remained in Europe. That year, over two hundred thousand American soldiers were playing baseball on military teams in France, Germany, Belgium, Austria and Britain.⁶²

Many of the Negro League's finest ballplayers saw military service during the war, but like other African Americans they faced discrimination and humiliation as soldiers. Most black soldiers with baseball talent were confined to playing on all-black teams. Larry Doby, who would later become the first African American in the American League, was blocked from playing baseball for the Great Lakes Navy team near Chicago. When Jackie Robinson went out for the baseball team at Fort Riley, Kansas, a white player told him that the officer in charge said, "I'll break up the team before I'll have a nigger on it."⁶³ Monte Irvin, a Negro League standout who later starred for the New York Giants, recalled that, "When I was in the Army I took basic training in the South. I'd been asked to give up everything, including my life, to defend democracy. Yet when I went to town I had to ride in the back of a bus, or not at all on some buses."⁶⁴ A few African Americans played on military teams in the South Pacific, but not in other military installations.⁶⁵

Nahem entered the military in November 1942. He volunteered for the infantry and hoped to see combat in Europe to help defeat Nazism. But he spent his first two years at Fort Totten in New York. While stationed there, however, he pitched for the Anti-Aircraft Redlegs of the Eastern Defense Command. The team was part of the Sunset League comprised of teams from military bases in the New England area. In 1943 he set a league record with a 0.85 ERA. He also finished second in hitting with a .400 batting average and played every defensive position except catcher.⁶⁶ These military games were important enough to be reported in the *New York Times* and other local papers.

While stationed at Fort Totten, Nahem pitched in several exhibition games with current and former Major Leaguers serving in the military. In June 1944 he pitched in the Polo Grounds in a game to raise money for War Bonds before thirty thousand spectators.⁶⁷ On September 5, 1944, his Fort Totten team beat the MLB Philadelphia Athletics by a 9–5 margin in an exhibition game. Nahem not only pitched six innings, giving up only two runs and five hits, but he also slugged two homers, accounting for seven of his team's runs.⁶⁸

Sent overseas in late 1944, Nahem served with an anti-aircraft artillery division. From his base in Rheims, he was assigned to run two baseball leagues for servicemen in France, while also managing and pitching for his own team, the Overseas Invasion Service Expedition (OISE) All-Stars, which was comprised mainly of semi-pro and ex-Minor League players. Besides Nahem, only one other OISE player had MLB experience—Russ Bauers, who had compiled a

29-29 win-loss record with the Pirates between 1936 and 1941. When Nahem wasn't pitching, he played first base.⁶⁹

Defying the military establishment and baseball tradition, Nahem insisted on having African Americans on his team. One was Willard Brown, an outfielder with the Kansas City Monarchs and one of the Negro Leagues' most feared sluggers.⁷⁰ The other was Leon Day, a star pitcher for the Negro League's Brooklyn Eagles. In the 1942 Negro League All-Star Game, Day had defeated the legendary Satchel Paige.⁷¹

Each branch of the military and different divisions had their own teams. The competition among the American teams in Europe was fierce. Nahem's OISE team won seventeen games and lost only one, attracting as many as ten thousand fans to their games.⁷² Nahem beat the Navy All-Stars in England, then pitcher Bob Keane beat the same team in France, to advance the OISE team to the semi-finals.⁷³ On September 1, in the semi-final round, Nahem pitched the OISE All-Stars into the European champion series by beating the Sixty-Sixth Division team, representing the Sixteenth Corps, by a 5-4 margin in eleven innings. Nahem also got four hits in five at bats.⁷⁴

The other team that reached the finals was the Seventy-First Infantry Red Circlers, representing the Third Army, commanded by General George Patton. Either Patton or one of his top officers assigned St. Louis Cardinals outfielder Harry Walker (a future All-Star) to assemble a team—the Seventy-First Infantry Division Red Circlers—to represent the Third Army. Walker arranged for some Major Leaguers to be transferred to his team. Besides Walker, the Red Circlers included Cincinnati Reds' 6'6" sidarm pitcher Ewell "the Whip" Blackwell,⁷⁵ Reds second baseman Benny Zientara, Pirates outfielders Johnny Wyrostek and Maurice Van Robays, Cardinals catcher Herb Bremer, Cardinals pitcher Al Brazle, Pirates pitcher Ken Heintzelman, and Giants pitcher Ken Trinkle. Against the powerful Red Circlers, few people gave Nahem's OISE All-Stars much of a chance to win the European Theater of Operations (ETO) championship, known as the GI World Series, which took place in September, a few months after the US and the Allies had defeated Germany.

The OISE All-Stars and the Red Circlers played the first two games in Nuremberg, Germany, in the same stadium where Hitler had addressed Nazi Party rallies. The US Army laid out a baseball diamond and renamed the stadium Soldiers Field.⁷⁶

Blackwell pitched the Red Circlers to a 9-2 victory in the first game of the best-of-five series in front of fifty thousand fans, most of them American soldiers.⁷⁷ In the second game, Day held Patton's army all-star team to one run. Brown drove in the OISE's team first run, and then Nahem (who was playing

first base) doubled in the seventh inning to knock in the go-ahead run. OISE won the game by a 2–1 margin. Day struck out ten batters, allowed four hits and walked only two hitters.⁷⁸

The two teams flew to Reims, France, for the next two games. The OISE team won the third game, as the *Times* reported, “behind the brilliant pitching of S/Sgt. Sam Nahem,” who outdueled Blackwell to win 2–1, scattering four hits and striking out six batters.⁷⁹ In the fourth game, the Third Army’s Bill Ayers, who had pitched in the MiLB since 1937, shut out the OISE squad, beating Day by a 5–0 margin.⁸⁰

The teams returned to Nuremberg for the deciding game on September 8, 1945. Nahem started for the OISE team in front of over fifty thousand spectators. After the Red Circlers scored a run and then loaded the bases with one out in the fourth inning, Nahem took himself out and brought in Bob Keane, who got out of the inning without allowing any more runs and completed the game. The OISE team won the game 2–1.⁸¹

A Jewish Communist and two Negro Leaguers had helped OISE win the GI World Series. The *Sporting News* adorned its report on the final game with a photo of Nahem.⁸²

Back in France, Brigadier General Charles Thrasher organized a parade and a banquet dinner, with steaks and champagne, for the OISE All-Stars. As historian Robert Weintraub noted: “Day and Brown, who would not be allowed to eat with their teammates in many major-league towns, celebrated alongside their fellow soldiers.”⁸³

Having won the ETO World Series, the OISE All-Stars traveled to Italy to play the Mediterranean Theater champions, the Ninety-Second Infantry Division Buffaloes, an all-black division. Several of the Fifth Army’s Red Circlers players—including Blackwell, Heintzelman, Van Robays, Zientara, Gardland Lawring, and Walker—joined Nahem’s integrated OISE team.⁸⁴ The OISE All-Stars beat the Buffaloes in three straight games, with Day, Keane, and Blackwell gaining the wins. Then Day switched to the all-black team and beat Blackwell and his former OISE teammates, 8–0, in Nice, France.⁸⁵

One of the intriguing aspects of this episode is that, despite the fact that both MLB and the American military were racially segregated, no major newspaper even mentioned the historic presence of two African Americans on the OISE roster. If there were any protests among the white players, or among the fans—or if any of the Seventy-First Division’s officers raised objections to having African American players on the opposing team—they were ignored by reporters. For example an Associated Press story about the fourth game simply referred to “pitcher Leon Day of Newark.”⁸⁶

In October 1945, a month after Nahem pitched his integrated team to victory in the military championship series in Europe, Branch Rickey announced that Robinson had signed a contract with the Dodgers.

THE BROOKLYN BUSHWICKS

Nahem played high-caliber baseball during his almost four-year service in the military. He was only thirty when he was discharged from military service. MLB teams were supposed to give their military veterans a chance to resume playing, but when Nahem came back from the war in early 1946, he did not return to the Phillies. Under the reserve clause, he was still the Phillies' property unless they formally released him, but there is no record that they did so. Whether the team let him know he wasn't wanted or whether Nahem decided to give up on the majors and finally start practicing law is not known.

After returning to New York, Nahem briefly as a law clerk and intermittently in his family's export-import business, and played baseball on weekends for a top-flight semi-pro team, the Brooklyn Bushwicks, who were on a par with, and occasionally even better than, the best MiLB teams.⁸⁷ The *Times* and other New York papers regularly covered the Bushwicks' games and Nahem's exploits on the mound. In August he pitched an eleven-inning no-hitter against the Seaport Gulls, giving up only two walks and facing only thirty-five batters, winning by a 1-0 score. It was the first no-hitter by a Bushwicks pitcher in ten years. Nahem's performance with the Bushwicks revealed that he was still an excellent pitcher, so his absence from a MLB roster remains a mystery.⁸⁸

In June 1946, a columnist for the *Nashville Tennessean* reported that while pitching on Sundays for the Bushwicks, and practicing law during the week, Nahem was also a candidate for the New York State Assembly from a Brooklyn district; the *Sporting News* and the *Chicago Tribune* both published brief notes reporting Nahem's candidacy, too.⁸⁹ But an article in the *Brooklyn Eagle* the following month reported that Nahem "has given up any idea of running for the State Assembly."⁹⁰ In August, however, the *Sporting News* wrote that Nahem was thinking of running for Congress from Brooklyn.⁹¹ Little is known about this aspect of Nahem's life and there's no evidence that he actually ran for any office. His oldest son Ivan wasn't aware that Nahem had ever run, or considered running, for public office.⁹²

Nahem couldn't have mounted much of a campaign because by October 1946, he was with the Bushwicks in Caracas, Venezuela, representing the United States in the Inter-American Tournament. Against teams representing

Mexico, Venezuela and Cuba, Nahem won three and lost one. He clinched the tournament title for the Bushwicks with a 7–6 win over Cuba.

Nahem was back with the Bushwicks for the 1947 season. In June, he pitched the team to a 4–1 victory over the Homestead Grays of the Negro Leagues, striking out eight batters.⁹³ In July he threw a six-hitter and struck out ten hitters to beat the Memphis Red Sox, another Negro League team, by 7–2.⁹⁴ On October 12, 1947, he pitched the Bushwicks to a 3–0 victory with a one-hitter against a barnstorming team, the World Series All-Stars, that included Major Leaguers Eddie Stanky, Phil Rizzuto, and Ralph Branca, who was the losing pitcher. It was Nahem's seventeenth win that season.⁹⁵ He eventually won twenty-one games in a row. During the 1946 and 1947 seasons, Nahem was 33–6 for the Bushwicks.⁹⁶

During those two years, while still playing for the Bushwicks, Nahem also played for the Sunset Stars, a semi-pro team based in Newport, Rhode Island. The Stars played their games on Wednesday nights and Nahem—who had played in the same league in 1943 while stationed at Fort Totten—was popular with the Rhode Island fans.⁹⁷ The Stars played local Rhode Island teams as well as Negro League teams and barnstorming teams like the House of David.⁹⁸ In a game in June 1946 against the Boston Colored Giants of the Negro League, Nahem pitched twelve innings and struck out twenty-two batters, only to lose 3–2.⁹⁹ That year he played in sixteen of the Stars' eighteen night games and struck out 193 hitters in 147 innings, posting a 1.81 ERA.¹⁰⁰

Nahem played winter ball with the Navegantes del Magallanes club of the Venezuelan Professional Baseball League, where he pitched fourteen consecutive complete games in the 1946–47 season to set a league record that still stands today.

Nahem once explained that he made more money playing for the Brooklyn Bushwicks, the Sunset Stars, and the Venezuelan club in the same year than he made as MLB pitcher.¹⁰¹

At the start of 1948, Nahem was still pitching with the Bushwicks. But by April, the Phillies beckoned again and he began another brief fling in the MLB.¹⁰² On April 30, his first game that season in a Phillies uniform, he pitched two innings in relief against the Dodgers, allowing only one hit but walking five batters and giving up four runs.¹⁰³

The Phillies were one of baseball's most racist teams, known for its verbal abuse toward Jackie Robinson in his rookie season the previous year. Their manager, Ben Chapman, gained notoriety for his vicious taunting of Robinson and was still managing the team during the first half of the 1948 season.¹⁰⁴

Years later, Nahem recalled that “he [Chapman] left me in once to take a

real beating. When you're a racist you are also an anti-Semite. Some reporters asked him about it, whether he kept me in there for some reason other than the demands of the game. He denied that it was anti-Semitism."¹⁰⁵

"I was very much for Jackie Robinson and at one point I tried to counter some of this racist stuff openly," Nahem recounted. "One of the southerners was fulminating in the clubhouse in a racist way and I made some halfway innocuous remark defending blacks coming in to baseball. Boy, he went into a real tantrum and really came down on me. So I decided I would not confront anyone openly. Your prestige on a ballclub depends on your won-loss record and your earned run average. I didn't have that to back me up. I only had logic and decency and humanity. So after that I would just speak to some of the guys privately about racism in a mild way."¹⁰⁶

In one game, Nahem threw a pitch that almost hit Roy Campanella, the Dodgers' African American rookie catcher. "He had come up that year and had been thrown at a lot, although there was absolutely no reason why I would throw at him," Nahem said. "A ball escaped me, which was not unusual, and went toward his head. He got up and gave me such a glare. I felt so badly about it I felt like yelling to him, 'Roy, please, I really didn't mean it. I belong to the NAACP!'"¹⁰⁷

During the 1948 season Nahem won three and lost three games for the Phillies, mostly in relief, on a team that had its sixteenth straight losing season, finishing sixth in the NL. He pitched his last MLB game on September 11, 1948, giving up one hit and one run, and striking out two batters, in the ninth inning against the Boston Braves.¹⁰⁸ A week later, the Phillies released him.¹⁰⁹

During four seasons spread over ten years, Nahem pitched 224 innings in ninety MLB games. Plagued with control problems, he struck out 101 batters but walked 127 hitters.¹¹⁰ Nahem took full advantage of his pitching repertoire. He was one of the few pitchers who pitched exclusively overhand (mostly curves and fastballs) against left-handed batters and exclusively side-arm (mostly sliders and fastballs) against right-handed hitters.¹¹¹ Not surprisingly for a right-handed pitcher, he performed better against right-handed batters (who hit .232 against him during his MLB career) than left-handed hitters (.307).¹¹²

Nahem was grateful for the friendships, experiences, and notoriety that his MLB career provided. But looking back, he noted that he wasn't very happy in his MLB days. Part of it was a matter of lifestyle. "We traveled a lot; we didn't have a stable place to stay." Another part was his failure to live up to his expectations as a player. "One day I'd pitch OK in relief, the next day they hit

the shit out of me. It's hard to be happy in something you're doing in just a mediocre way."¹¹³

He once said: "I often wish that God had given me movement on my fast-ball, but he didn't."¹¹⁴ In another interview, he observed, "I had just-above-mediocre stuff. Just enough to flash at times."¹¹⁵ He particularly regretted that, even as a big leaguer, he never received the mentoring that could have helped him improve his pitching. Long after he retired, he learned that coaches for opposing teams noticed that he tipped his pitches—he raised his arms higher during the windup when throwing a curve—but his own coaches had never spotted this flaw. "If I had some decent coaches, they would have spotted it, too," Nahem said.¹¹⁶

Looking back on his MLB career, Nahem wistfully observed that "if I executed what I understand now, I could have been quite a decent pitcher. I had enough stuff to be a fairly good pitcher . . . I was a smart pitcher out there, but at the last second, I wouldn't have confidence in my control, so I would forget to pitch high or low or outside and just try to get it over the plate."¹¹⁷ In a revealing exchange, he once asked Phillies teammate Robin Roberts, a future Hall of Fame pitcher, if he was ever scared when he was on the mound. Roberts said he wasn't. "That is what really pisses me off," Nahem responded. "I'm scared stiff out there."¹¹⁸

Despite his trepidation on the mound, Nahem kept his sense of humor. While with the Phillies, he was brought in as a reliever to face three of the Cardinals' best hitters—Red Schoendienst, Enos Slaughter, and Stan Musial. He retired Schoendienst and then signaled Phillies' first baseman Dick Sisler to come to the mound. As Roberts recalled: "We all saw Dick laughing while he trotted back to first. After the inning was over Dick said that Sam had told him, 'I got the first guy, you want to try these next two?'"¹¹⁹

After leaving the Phillies, Nahem pitched briefly for the San Juan team in the Puerto Rican League at the end of 1948.¹²⁰ Then he rejoined the Bushwicks for the 1949 season. He won seven games in a row by the end of June and finished the season with a 10-7 record.¹²¹ That season he still occasionally played for the Sunset Stars. He was so popular that the local paper, the *Newport Mercury*, published a story about his wedding. According to the June 10, 1949 edition, "After playing in the 13-inning game Wednesday which ran past midnight Nahem caught the 2:10 train at Providence and arrived in New York three hours before his wedding."¹²² In August, Nahem's Stars lost to the Boston Colored Giants, a Negro League team, but he struck out seven batters and got three hits in five at bats.¹²³ He pitched his final game for the Bushwicks in October, then hung up his spikes.

STARTING OVER AFTER BASEBALL

By the time Nahem ended his playing career, the Cold War was in full swing, casting a chill on American radicals, but he remained a committed leftist. Just as he had participated in radical causes during the 1930s, like raising money for the anti-fascists during the Spanish Civil War, Nahem continued his political activism. In 1949, at age thirty-four, he married art student Elsie Hanson, whom he'd met at a CP-sponsored concert and fundraiser.¹²⁴ In 1950, his name appeared on a list of candidates running for the New York State Assembly from New York City as the candidate of the American Labor Party (ALP), a left-leaning group whose most prominent member was Congressman Vito Marcantonio.¹²⁵ Perhaps the ALP thought that his fame as a former ballplayer would garner votes. Whether he actually campaigned for the seat isn't known, but he didn't win. In 1951, according to his son Ivan, he participated in protests against the controversial conviction of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, who were sentenced to death for being Soviet spies.

During that period, he worked briefly as a law clerk in New York. Nahem told an interviewer that he wanted to practice civil liberties law, but that the jobs in that field were dominated by graduates of Ivy League law schools, stiff competition for a graduate of St. John's School of Law.¹²⁶ During the Cold War, even organizations like the American Civil Liberties Union, much less mainstream law firms, were wary of hiring lawyers with left-wing views, especially Communists.

"He went into the law thinking he'd be Clarence Darrow," his son Ivan explained, "but he was soon disillusioned and bored, and quit." He worked briefly for his family's import business,¹²⁷ as a door-to-door salesman, and then as a longshoreman unloading banana boats on the New York docks.

Like many leftists during the 1950s Red Scare, the FBI kept tabs on Nahem. FBI agents would show up at his workplaces and tell his bosses that he was a Communist. He lost several jobs as a result. It isn't clear when their surveillance of him began or ended, but as late as 1961—when he had moved to California and was working in a chemical fertilizing plant and was a union leader—the FBI was still keeping a file on him.¹²⁸

To escape the Cold War witch-hunting, and to start life anew, Nahem, his wife Elsie, and their two children (Ivan, born in 1950, and Joanne, born in 1953) moved to the San Francisco area in 1955, settling first in Mill Valley, and then blue-collar Richmond in the East Bay. A third child, Andrew, was born in 1961. Elsie found work as a commercial artist.

Nahem got a job at the Chevron fertilizer plant in Richmond, owned by the giant Standard Oil corporation. During most of his twenty-five years at

Chevron (more than twice the time he spent playing professional baseball), he worked a grueling schedule—two weeks on midnight shift, two weeks on day shift, then two weeks on swing shift.

By 1957, like many other Communists, Nahem and Elise became disillusioned with Russia's stifling of democracy in Eastern Europe and within its own borders, and left the Communist Party. But he remained an activist. He served as head of the local safety committee for the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union at the Richmond plant. Nahem was often offered management positions, but he refused to take them, preferring to remain loyal to his coworkers and his union. He ended as head operator, the best job he could get and still stay in the union.

Nahem liked to relax by watching football and baseball on television and passing on his enthusiasm for sports to his kids. "When I was a kid," son Ivan recalled, "some of my best times with him were playing catch."

While still working at Chevron, Nahem moved to nearby Berkeley in 1964. That year the Free Speech Movement started on the nearby University of California, Berkeley, campus and the town became a hotbed of radicalism. Despite his grueling work schedule, Nahem immersed himself in the new wave of activism. He took his children to civil rights and anti-war demonstrations. His son Ivan recalled Nahem hosting lots of dinner parties where the talk was all about politics. In 1969, Nahem helped lead a strike among Chevron workers that attracted support from the Berkeley campus radicals.

After he retired from Chevron in 1980, he volunteered at the University Art Museum and frequented a Berkeley coffee shop, where he loved engaging in political discussions with local students, artists, and activists. After George Bush defeated Al Gore for president in 2000, Nahem told a nephew: "For much of my adult life I've seen the working class vote against their long-term interests. This is the first time I've seen them vote against their short-term interests."¹²⁹

Sam and his brother Joe remained close until Joe's death in 1992. "They were hilarious together at parties, reminiscent sometimes of their heroes the Marx Brothers," recalled Joe's daughter Beladee.¹³⁰ At a dinner party in the 1990s, Nahem told his fellow diners, "Many people used to compare me with Sandy Koufax. They would say 'You were no Koufax.' I told them thanks for putting me and Koufax in the same sentence."¹³¹

Nahem's wife died of cancer in 1974. He never remarried but he had a long-term relationship with Nancy Shafsky. He died on April 19, 2004 in Berkeley at age eighty-eight. Nahem was survived by his three children and three grandchildren. His older sister Victoria, who married a man named Abraham Silvera, had a son, Aaron Albert (Al) Silvera, who played in fourteen games for

the Cincinnati Redlegs in 1955 and 1956, making Nahem the uncle of another Major Leaguer.

Nahem was proud of his accomplishments on the diamond, which gave him a lifetime of memories and stories that he shared with his friends and family.

“I loved the feeling of a baseball in my hand. And the perfect meeting of the bat with the ball was the nearest thing to an orgasm,” he wrote in his autobiographical essay during his later years. “In both you are disembodied, weightless.”¹³²

Although he often talked about his days as a MLB pitcher, he rarely discussed the accomplishment that best combined his athletic talent and his political views—his role in integrating military baseball.

PETER DREIER is the E.P. Clapp Distinguished Professor of Politics and chair of the Urban & Environmental Policy Department at Occidental College. His most recent book is *The 100 Greatest Americans of the 20th Century: A Social Justice Hall of Fame* (Nation Books, 2012).

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author wishes to thank Ivan Nahem, Beladee Nahem Griffiths Joel Isaacs, David Nemeč, Bill Nowlin, Robert Elias, Mike Lynch, Robert Weintraub, Rory Costello, Warren Corbett, Lee Lowenfish, Shawn Hennessy, Dan Wormhoudt, Isaac Silvera, Sam Bernstein, Colleen Bradley-Sanders (Brooklyn College archivist), and Cassidy Lent (Baseball Hall of Fame librarian) for their help.

NOTES

1. Sam Nahem, “The Autobiography of Samuel Ralph Nahem,” (fifteen pages) provided by Ivan Nahem (hereafter “The Autobiography”), undated.

2. Nahem, “The Autobiography.”

3. Harold Parrott, “Nahem Fortunes Curved Up and His Pitches Over Plate On Rickey Biblical Quotation and ‘Psychology Séance,’” *Sporting News*, May 22, 1941.

4. “Evolution of adult height over time,” NCD Risk Factor Collaboration, <http://www.ncdrisc.org/data-downloads-height.html>.

5. Nahem, “The Autobiography.”

6. Nahem, “The Autobiography.”

7. Parrott, “Nahem Fortunes Curved Up.”

8. Nahem, “The Autobiography.” Nahem also tells this story in an interview for Ephross with Abramowitz, *Jewish Major Leaguers in Their Own Words*; in Robin Roberts and C. Paul Rogers III, *The Whiz Kids and the 1950 Pennant* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000); and in an interview in Brent Kelley, “Sam Nahem:

The Pitching Attorney,” *Sports Collectors Digest*, Dec. 23, 1994. Nahem was wrong about Mungo’s origins. He was from South Carolina, not Oklahoma.

9. Nahem, “The Autobiography.”

10. During his playing career, many news stories about Nahem reported that he graduated from Brooklyn College, but research by Brooklyn College archivist Colleen Bradley-Sanders indicates that he left Brooklyn College in 1935 after his junior year. Colleen Bradley-Sanders, email message to author, May 25, 2018.

11. “Priest, Pitcher, Cop Pass Tests for Bar,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, December 23, 1938; George Kirksey, “Dodger Fans May Demand Nahem Plead Own Defense,” *Nashville Tennessean*, March 7, 1940 (Associated Press).

12. Burton Boxerman and Benita Boxerman, *Jews and Baseball*, vol. 1 (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2007); Peter S. Horvitz and Joachim Horvitz, *The Big Book of Jewish Baseball* (New York: SPI Books, 2001).

13. “Sam Nahem,” Baseball-Reference.com, <https://www.baseball-reference.com/register/player.fcgi?id=nahem-001sam>.

14. The *Times* was mistaken. Nahem was a right-handed pitcher, not a “southpaw,” baseball slang for left-handed.

15. “Brooklyn Dodgers at Philadelphia Phillies Box Score, October 2, 1938,” Baseball-Reference.com, <https://www.baseball-reference.com/boxes/PHI/PHI193810021.shtml>.

16. Peter Ephross with Martin Abramowitz, *Jewish Major Leaguers in Their Own Words: Oral Histories of 23 Players* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2012). For Grimes’ influence on Nahem, see also Robert B. Cooke, “Nahem, Lawyer—Plea to Dodgers,” *New York Herald Tribune*, February 10, 1940.

17. “14 From the Minors Recalled By Dodgers,” *New York Times*, August 29, 1939; “Series Lead to Nashville,” *New York Times*, October 2, 1939.

18. Roscoe McGowen, “Mungo of Dodgers Bent on Comeback,” *New York Times*, February 18, 1940.

19. Stanley Frank, *New York Post*, February 22, 1940. This article is from the Nahem file in the Baseball Hall of Fame archives. The headline is missing.

20. Roscoe McGowen, “19 Dodgers Face Nahem in Inning,” *New York Times*, March 5, 1940.

21. Kirksey, “Dodger Fans May Demand Nahem Plead Own Defense.”

22. Roscoe McGowen, “Dodgers Abided by Landis Hints, Not ‘Orders,’ MacPhail Explains,” *New York Times*, May 29, 1940.

23. “Cards Option Three Players,” *New York Times*, July 2, 1940.

24. Kingsley Childs, “Star Outfielder Traded by Cards,” *New York Times*, June 13, 1940.

25. “Exports Face Buffs Today,” *Brownsville Herald*, September 17, 1940; “Vols Rest for First Game of Dixie Series,” *Jackson (TN) Sun*, September 24, 1940; “Cards and Browns Draw 4 Texas Aces,” *Sporting News*, October 31, 1940; “Nashville Takes Lead

Over Buffs in Dixie Series,” *Waco News-Tribune*, September 26, 1940; “Volunteers Take Shutout Triumph Over Bison Team,” *Waco News-Tribune*, September 30, 1940. Harold Parrott, “Nahem Fortunes Curved Up and His Pitches Over Plate On Rickey Biblical Quotation and ‘Psychology Séance,’” *Sporting News*, May 22, 1941.

26. Ephross with Abramowitz, *Jewish Major Leaguers in Their Own Words*.

27. Parrott, “Nahem Fortunes Curved Up.”

28. Ephross with Abramowitz, *Jewish Major Leaguers in Their Own Words*. In 1941 Nahem told the *New York Daily News* that Warneke helped him improve his slider. See also Joe Trimble, “Cards Keep Nahem As Starting Hurler,” *New York Daily News*, May 14, 1941.

29. Tommy Holmes, “Nahem in Strong Bid for Dodger Pitching Job,” *Brooklyn Eagle*, February 22, 1940.

30. Parrott, “Nahem Fortunes Curved Up.”

31. James Murphy, “Sammy Eyes Series Dough,” *Brooklyn Eagle*, July 11, 1941.

32. “Nahem, Cardinals, Halts Pirates, 3-1,” *New York Times*, April 24, 1941. Box score: <https://www.baseball-reference.com/boxes/SLN/SLN194104230.shtml>.

33. Nahem, “The Autobiography.”

34. Ephross with Abramowitz, *Jewish Major Leaguers in Their Own Words*.

35. “Nahem Sets Back Terrymen By 6-4,” *New York Times*, May 1, 1941. Box score: <https://www.baseball-reference.com/boxes/NY1/NY1194104300.shtml>.

36. “Cincinnati Reds at St. Louis Cardinals Box Score, May 30, 1941,” Baseball-Reference.com, <https://www.baseball-reference.com/boxes/SLN/SLN194105302.shtml>.

37. “Vander Meer Tops Cards for Reds, 2-1; Stars on Mound and in Field—St. Louis is Turned Back Fourth Straight Time; Victors Score in First; Nahem Suffers Only Defeat in Six Starts,” *New York Times*, July 5, 1942. Box score: <http://www.retrosheet.org/boxesetc/1941/Bo7050CIN1941.htm>.

38. John Drebing, “19 Hits By St. Louis Crush Giants, 11-3,” *New York Times*, June 8, 1941.

39. This information is from an article in the Nahem file in the Baseball Hall of Fame archives dated August 21, 1941. The name of the newspaper and headline are missing.

40. Nahem, “The Autobiography.”

41. This article is from the Nahem file in the Baseball Hall of Fame archives. It is dated April 6, 1939, but the name of the newspaper and the headline is missing.

42. Harry Grayson, “Russo Hurls One-Hitter As Yanks Extend Hit Streaks,” *Arizona Republic*, June 27, 1941

43. George Kirksey, “Dodger Fans May Demand Nahem Plead Own Defense,” *Nashville Tennessean*, May 7, 1940 (Associated Press).

44. James Lawson, “Subway Sam, the Nahem Man, Is Poison to Cardinal Foes,” *Cumberland Evening Times*, June 2, 1941 (Associated Press).

45. Tommy Holmes, "Nahem in Strong Bid for Dodger Pitching Job," *Brooklyn Eagle*, February 22, 1940.

46. Joe Eskenazi, "Artful Dodger: Baseball's 'Subway' Sam strikes out batters, and with the ladies' too," *J Weekly*, October 23, 2003, <http://www.jweekly.com/article/full/20827/artful-dodger>.

47. Roberts and Rogers, *The Whiz Kids and the 1950 Pennant*, 147.

48. Joe Eskenazi, "'Subway' Sam Nahem, Ballplayer and Union Man, Dies at 88," *J Weekly*, April 23, 2004, <http://www.jweekly.com/article/full/22430/-subway-sam-nahem-ballplayer-and-union-man-dies-at-88>.

49. Eskenazi, "Artful Dodger."

50. Nahem, "The Autobiography."

51. Eskenazi, "Artful Dodger." Figures on the number of Jews in the majors for each year come from Jewish Baseball News: <http://www.jewishbaseballnews.com/>.

52. Eskenazi, "Artful Dodger." Eskenazi conducted the interview with Nahem for the book, *Jewish Major Leaguers in Their Own Words* by Ephross with Abramowitz. There are slight differences in the wording in the two interviews. Unless otherwise indicated, I've used quotes from Nahem in the Eskenazi article.

53. Eskenazi, "Artful Dodger."

54. Eskenazi, "'Subway' Sam Nahem."

55. Nahem's membership in the Communist Party was confirmed by his son Ivan, his niece Beladee Griffiths, and his cousin Joel Isaacs; mentioned in several obituaries, and hinted at in Nahem's unpublished "Autobiography." Ivan Nahem, Nahem's son, phone interview with author, January 3, 2017; Beladee Nahem Griffiths, Nahem's niece, phone interviews with author, January 7 and 14, 2018; Joel Isaacs, Nahem's cousin, email message to author, January 9, 2017; Beladee Nahem Griffiths, email message to author, January 9, 2018; Patricia Yollin, "Samuel Ralph Nahem—Big-Leaguer in Many Ways," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 3, 2004 <http://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/Samuel-Ralph-Nahem-big-leaguer-in-many-ways-2762291.php>; Stan Isaacs, "Major Leaguer Sam Nahem was one-of-a-kind," *TheColumnists.com*, 2004; Stephen Miller, "Subway Sam Nahem, 88, Pitcher and Briefly a Dodger," *New York Sun*, May 4, 2004.

56. The Communist Party's involvement in the civil rights and labor movement, particularly during the Depression, are discussed in Hosea Hudson and Nell Irvin Painter, *The Narrative of Hosea Hudson, His Life As a Negro Communist in the South* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979); Robin Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists during the Great Depression* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990); Robert Korstad, *Civil Rights Unionism: Tobacco Workers and the Struggle for Democracy in the Mid-Twentieth-Century South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); August Meier and Elliott Rudwick, *Black Detroit and the Rise of the UAW*; Mark Naison, *Communists in Harlem during the Depression*

(Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2004); and Mark Solomon, *The Cry Was Unity: Communists and African Americans, 1917-36* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1998).

57. The protest movement to integrate MLB is discussed in Jules Tygiel, *Baseball's Great Experiment: Jackie Robinson and His Legacy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983); Chris Lamb, *Conspiracy of Silence: Sportswriters and the Long Campaign to Desegregate Baseball* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012); Irwin Silber, *Press Box Red: The Story of Lester Rodney, the Communist Who Helped Break the Color Line in American Sports* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003); Lee Lowenfish, *Branch Rickey: Baseball's Ferocious Gentleman* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009); and Arnold Rampersad, *Jackie Robinson: A Biography* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1997).

58. Silber, *Press Box Red*.

59. Nahem, "The Autobiography."

60. Nahem, "The Autobiography."

61. Jennifer Felicia Abadi, *A Fistful of Lentils: Syrian-Jewish Recipes from Grandma Fritzie's Kitchen* (Boston: Harvard Common Press, 2007).

62. Discussion of WWII military baseball drawn from the following sources: Robert Weintraub, *The Victory Season: The End of World War II and the Birth of Baseball's Golden Age* (New York: Little Brown & Co., 2013); John Klima, *The Game Must Go On: Hank Greenberg, Pete Gray, and the Great Days of Baseball on the Home Front in WWII* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2015); William B. Mead, *Baseball Goes to War* (Washington, D.C.: Faragut Publishing Co., 1985); Steven Bullock, *Playing for Their Nation: Baseball and the American Military during World War II* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004); David Finol, *For the Good of the Country: World War II Baseball in the Major and Minor Leagues*, (Jefferson NC: McFarland & Company, 2002); "OISE Base Takes GI World Series: 50,000 See All-Stars Defeat Third Army by 3-2 in Ninth Inning of Deciding Game," *New York Times*, September 9, 1945; Tim Wendel, "The G.I. World Series," December 10, 2015 <http://www.thenationalpastimemuseum.com/article/gi-world-series>; Robert Weintraub, "Three Reichs, You're Out: The Amazing Story of the U.S. Military's Integrated 'World Series' in Hitler Youth Stadium in 1945," *Slate*, April 2013 http://www.slate.com/articles/sports/sports_nut/2013/04/baseball_in_world_war_ii_the_amazing_story_of_the_u_s_military_s_integrated.html

63. Rampersad, *Jackie Robinson: A Biography*, 91. See also Tygiel, *Baseball's Great Experiment*, 61-62.

64. Quoted in Jackie Robinson, *Baseball Has Done It* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1964).

65. Bullock, *Playing for Their Nation*, 60-61.

66. "Nahem Sets Sunset League Pace," *Sporting News*, October 7, 1943; "Les Horn Wins Batting Crown," *Newport Mercury*, September 17, 1943.

67. "Big War Bond Show Is Set for Tonight," *New York Times*, June 17, 1944; "Sports Carnival Attracts 30,000; Varied Program Stages at the Polo Grounds," *New York Times*, June 18, 1944.

68. "Nahem Stages One-Man Show," *Sporting News*, September 14, 1944.

69. "70th Anniversary of the 1945 ETO World Series," *Baseball in Wartime*, Issue 39, September/October 2015, <http://www.baseballinwartime.com/BIWNewsletterVol7No39Sep-Oct2015.pdf>.

70. Rory Costello, "Willard Brown," Society for American Baseball Research, <https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/49784799>.

71. Thomas Kern, "Leon Day," Society for American Baseball Research, <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/f6e24f41>.

72. "70th Anniversary of the 1945 ETO World Series." An Associated Press story in the *Des Moines Register* a few months later claimed that the OISE team was 37–3 that season. See Sec Taylor, "Sittin' In With the Athletes," *Des Moines Register*, January 27, 1946

73. "70th Anniversary of the 1945 ETO World Series."

74. "3d Army, Oise Nines Gain ETO GI Finals," *New York Times*, September 1, 1945.

75. Blackwell was one of the strongest opponents of baseball integration and Jackie Robinson. Rampersad, *Jackie Robinson*, 183; Roger Kahn, *Rickey and Robinson: The True Untold Story of the Integration of Baseball* (New York: Rodale, 2014), 255.

76. The stadium's playing surface was so big that it fit a baseball diamond, a soccer field and football field at the same time. German POWs had been ordered to build extra bleachers to accommodate the large crowd. Putting a baseball field in Hitler's stadium was a powerful symbol. "We had a conqueror's frame of mind," recalled one American soldier. "The Germans had surrendered unconditionally, and this proved it." See Weintraub, *The Victory Season*. See also, Raymond Daniell, "Nazi Shrine in Nuremburg Stadium Now Serves as a Ball Field for GI's," *New York Times*, June 28, 1945.

77. "3d Army Nine Slaps Com Z, 9–2, in Opener" *London Stars and Stripes*, September 4, 1945; "3rd Army Cops Series Opener at Nuremburg," *Sporting News*, September 6, 1945.

78. "Com Z Evens Series With 2–1 Decision," *London Stars and Stripes*, September 5, 1945

79. "Oise Nine Beats Third Army," *New York Times*, September 6, 1945

80. "3rd Army Ties Diamond Series For ETO Title," *London Stars and Stripes*, September 8, 1945

81. Contemporary accounts of the final game agree that Keane took over for Nahem in the fourth inning and pitched the rest of the game, and that Richardson knocked in Smayda for the winning run. See "OISE Base Takes GI World Series: 50,000 See All-Stars Defeat Third Army by 3–2 in Ninth Inning of Deciding Game," *New York Times*,

September 9, 1945; “All Stars Win European Title in GI Playoff,” *Sporting News*, September 13, 1945; and “OISE Nine Captures ETO Baseball Crown,” *London Stars and Stripes*, September 10, 1945. The account on the *Baseball in Wartime* website agrees with these accounts. The accounts in Weintraub’s *The Victory Season*. 61 and in SABR’s profile of Russ Bauers (<https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/4c6acb7c>) report that Bauers came in to relieve Nahem. But Bauers relieved Day in the fourth game for five and two-thirds innings, making it unlikely that he would have pitched in the next game. http://www.baseballinwartime.com/player_biographies/bauers_russ.htm. *The Victory Season* also has a different account of the OISE win. He writes that Nahem put Leon Day in the game as a pinch runner in the seventh inning and that Day quickly stole second, then stole third base, and then raced home on a shallow fly ball, tying the score. It also reports that Willard Brown knocked in the winning run in the eighth inning. I’ve found no other accounts of the final game that corroborate this version of events. In an email to me on December 28, 2017, Weintraub generously acknowledged that his account of that game is probably mistaken.

82. “All Stars Win European Title in GI Playoff,” *Sporting News*, September 13, 1945.

83. Weintraub, *The Victory Season*.

84. There’s no record of how Walker, an Alabaman, felt about playing on a team with two black players or about competing against an all-black team. He and his brother Fred “Dixie” Walker, a Dodgers outfielder, were unhappy when the Dodgers’ brought Jackie Robinson to the big leagues. Accounts vary about whether the grumbling by the Walker brothers and other players (particularly those, like Harry, who played for the Cardinals) evolved into a plan by some players to go on strike rather than play against Robinson. If such a plan was ever hatched, it quickly fizzled, but both Walker brothers were branded as racists and were both soon traded. Years later, Harry Walker was asked about the incident but avoided a direct answer. “Nothing was ever concrete on it,” he said. “There was a rumor spread through the whole thing. And everybody was involved to a point, but that was never done.” George Vecsey, *Stan Musial: An American Life* (New York: ESPN, 2011), cited in <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/3bbe3106#sdendnote14sym>. The players’ rebellion against Robinson is described in Lee Lowenfish, *Branch Rickey: Baseball’s Ferocious Gentleman* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009); Rampersad, *Jackie Robinson*; Kahn, *Rickey & Robinson*, and Tygiel, *Baseball’s Great Experiment*. Kahn claims that Dixie Walker explained the secret plan to him in detail. Corbett disputes the existence of a players strike against Robinson in Warren Corbett, “The ‘Strike’ Against Jackie Robinson: Truth or Myth?,” *Baseball Research Journal*, Spring 2017. <https://sabr.org/research/strike-against-jackie-robinson-truth-or-myth>

85. “Leon Day,” *Baseball in Wartime*, http://www.baseballinwartime.com/player_biographies/day_leon.htm

86. “71st Division Wins ETO Game by 9 to 2,” *New York Times*, September 3, 1945; “All Stars Win European Title in GI Playoff,” *Sporting News*, September 13, 1945; “Third Army Loses to All-Stars, 2-1: Four-Hit Hurling of Leo Day of Newark Squares

GI Series of One Each," *New York Times*, September 4, 1945; "Third Army Nine Loses to Oise," Plainfield (N.J.) *Courier News*, September 6, 1945; "Third Army Name Evens Series," *Des Moines Register*, September 7, 1945 .

87. Founded in 1917, the Bushwicks fielded an ethnically mixed team that included many future and former major leaguers, frequently played exhibition games with major league players, and regularly scheduled games with Negro League teams, which helped pave the way for baseball's eventual racial integration in 1947. Advertising "Big League Baseball at Workingman's Rates," their games attracted an average of fifteen thousand paying fans for Sunday doubleheaders in the 1930s and 1940s. The team folded in 1951. Thomas Barthel, *Baseball's Peerless Semipro: The Brooklyn Bushwicks of Dexter Park* (Harworth, N.J.: Saint Johann Press, 2009).

88. "Nahem, Bushwicks, Tosses No-Hit Tilt," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, August 19, 1946.

89. Red O'Donnell, "Top O' The Mornin'," *Nashville Tennessean*, June 2, 1946. O'Donnell wrote: "Sam Nahem, former Nashville Vol pitcher, is a candidate for assemblyman from New York. . . . Lawyer Nahem is no longer in organized baseball, but pitches on Sundays for the Bushwicks, Flatbush semi-pro nine. . . . Sam attended the Vine Street Temple while with the Dellers"; "Errors Cost Mort Fourth Loss," *Sporting News*, June 26, 1946; Arch Ward, "In the Wake of the News," *Chicago Tribune*, July 18, 1946. It is possible that the *Sporting News* and *Tribune* articles simply picked up the story of Nahem's candidacy from O'Donnell's column.

90. Ben Gould, "Below the Majors," *Brooklyn Eagle*, July 27, 1946.

91. Dan Daniel, "Early Sign-Ups Sought to Block Pasquel Raids," *Sporting News*, August 14, 1946

92. Sam's younger brother Joe was also an outstanding athlete, playing baseball and football at Brooklyn College. He was a year behind Sam at Brooklyn College but graduated from St. John's law school in 1937, a year before Sam. In 1937, while Sam was in his third year in the minor leagues, Joe signed a contract with the Brooklyn Dodgers and pitched that season with their Class D minor team, the Reidsville Luckies in Readsville, North Carolina. The *Brooklyn Eagle* reported that in his debut with the team he pitched a five hitter, winning the game 5-2. In 1940 and 1941, Joe pitched for the semi-pro Queens Club in the same league as the Brooklyn Bushwicks, which Sam joined after the war. Joe also pitched and played the outfield for military teams during World War II. After Germany and Japan had surrendered and combat ended, Joe Nahem was a leader of the GI movement that emerged at bases around the world (including India, Germany, France, the Philippines, Hawaii, and elsewhere) to demand that the War Department send them home more quickly as well as improve conditions for non-officers. He was almost court-martialed for his involvement in the protests. Upon returning to New York City after the war, Joe worked primarily as a social worker and remained active in the Communist Party for many years, taught classes at the CP-sponsored Jefferson School of Social Sciences in New York City, earned a PhD in psychology, and wrote a book, *Psychology & Psychiatry Today: A Marxist View* (New York: International Publishers, 1981) published by International Publishers,

another institution with close CP ties. Sources: Pop Harris, "Upstate Fertile Victory Field, Hiltons Find," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, June 29, 1937; "Luckies Down Martinsville By 5-2 Count," *Danville (Virginia) Bee*, June 15, 1937; Sergeant Joseph Swartz, "Schafter Sportlights," *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, January 11, 1946; "'Send Us Home,' Say Soldiers in Honolulu," *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, January 9, 1946; "Boro Ballplayer Spokesman for GIs in Manila Protest," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, January 9, 1946; Felix Belair, "Eisenhower Orders Return of All Men Not Needed Abroad: Commanders Are Also Directed to Reduce Their Troop Requirements 'to the Minimum,'" *New York Times*, January 10, 1946; "Paris Troops Urge Curbs on Officers," *New York Times*, January 14, 1946; "Richardson Warns of Court Martial: 3 Leaders of Oahu Protest Group Held to Quarters Pending Study of Remarks," *Honolulu Advertiser*, January 17, 1946; "Three GI Leaders Are Released, General Reports," *Honolulu Advertiser*, January 18, 1946; "Free Two Boro GIs in Protest Rally," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, January 18, 1946; "Eisenhower Bans GI Demonstrations," *New York Times*, January 18, 1946; "Why GIs Demonstrate," *The Nation*, January 19, 1946; "Eligible Or Not, GI's Whoop It Up Against Slowdown in Getting Out," *Newsweek*, January 21, 1946; Westbrook Pegler, "GI Suckers," *Akron Beacon-Journal*, February 14, 1946; Marquit Erwin, "The Demobilization Movement of January 1946," *Nature, Society, and Thought*, 15, no. 1 (2002): 5-39; Alton Lee, "The Army 'Mutiny' of 1946," *Journal of American History*, 53 (December 1966), 555-71; *Subversive Influence in the Educational Process: Hearings before the United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee To Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, Eighty-Second Congress, second session, Eighty-Third Congress, first session, September 8, 9, 10, 23, 24, 25, and October 13, 1952; Communist Training Operations: Hearing Before the Committee on Un-American Activities, House of Representatives, Eighty Sixth Congress, July 21 and 22, 1959.*

93. "Bushwicks Score Tenth Win in Row," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, June 12, 1947

94. "Bushwicks Face House of David, Bristol Bees," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, June 19, 1947.

95. "Branca Beaten as Stars Lose Pair to Bushwicks," *New York Times*, October 13, 1947; Jack Lang, "World's Series Stars Bums to Bushwick Club," *Sporting News*, October 22, 1947.

96. "Sam Nahem Loses After 21 Wins," *Sporting News*, September 3, 1947.

97. "Ex-Sunset Star Seeks City League Role," *Newport Mercury*, April 19, 1946

98. "Sunset Stars Lose, 5-3 to House of David," *Newport Mercury*, August 30, 1946; "Sports in the News," *Newport Mercury*, August 25, 1955; Lawrence D. Hogan and Jeffrey L. Statts, "Baseball in the Ocean State: Rhode Island Black Baseball, 1886-1948," in William M. Simons, ed., *The Cooperstown Symposium on Baseball and American Culture, 2000* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 2001).

99. "Sports in the News: Strikeout Heroics," *Newport Daily News*, July 28, 1953.

100. "Sam Nahem Marries New York Commercial Artist," *Newport Mercury*, June 10, 1949.

101. "Sports in the News," *Newport Mercury*, September 20, 1968.

102. "Sam Nahem, Vet Hurler, Back on Phillies Staff," *Sporting News*, May 5, 1948.

103. "Brooklyn Dodgers 11, Philadelphia Phillies 2," Retrosheet, <http://www.retrosheet.org/boxesetc/1948/Bo4300PHI1948.htm>.

104. Marc Tracy, "69 Years Later, Philadelphia Apologizes to Jackie Robinson," *New York Times*, April 14, 2016, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/15/sports/baseball/philadelphia-apologizes-to-jackie-robinson.html?_r=0; Robin Roberts and C. Paul Rogers III, *The Whiz Kids and the 1950 Pennant* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000).

105. Roberts and Rogers, *The Whiz Kids*, 119.

106. Roberts and Rogers, *The Whiz Kids*, 51.

107. Roberts and Rogers, *The Whiz Kids*, 51. This story was also recounted by Nahem's son Ivan, who explained: "For Sam, this was an unpardonable error. He wanted to apologize, but baseball protocol prohibited any show of remorse." According to official records, Nahem only faced Campanella once that season—on August 17. He came in to relieve in the sixth inning and struck Campanella out. It is likely that Nahem threw the errant pitch to Campanella during that at-bat. <http://www.retrosheet.org/boxesetc/1948/Bo8170PHI1948.htm>

108. "Boston Braves at Philadelphia Phillies Box Score, September 11, 1948," Baseball-Reference.com, <https://www.baseball-reference.com/boxes/PHI/PHI194809112.shtml>.

109. "Phils Drop Padgett, Nahem," *New York Times*, September 18, 1948

110. "Sam Nahem," Baseball-Reference.com, <https://www.baseball-reference.com/players/n/nahemsao1.shtml>; "Sam Nahem," Retrosheet, <http://www.retrosheet.org/boxesetc/N/Pnahes101.htm>.

111. Several recent reviews of Nahem's career describe his delivery to right-handed hitters as "submarine." See, for example, Bill James and Rob Neyer, *The Neyer/James Guide to Pitchers* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004), 321. Baseball Reference also reports that Nahem threw a "submarine slider" to right-handed hitters (https://www.baseball-reference.com/bullpen/Sam_Nahem) and includes Nahem on its list of "submarine pitchers" (https://www.baseball-reference.com/bullpen/List_of_Submarine_Pitchers). But news accounts during Nahem's playing days described his delivery to right-handed batters as "sidearm." See, for example, Milton Miller, "Barons Nose Out Elmira With Two Run Rally in Ninth," *Wilkes-Barre Record*, June 25, 1938; Tommy Holmes, "Nahem in Strong Bid for Dodger Pitching Job," *Brooklyn Eagle*, February 22, 1940; Dent McSkimming, "Cardinals' Hurlers In Condition," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, March 6, 1941; Joe Trimble, "Cards Keep Nahem As Starting Hurler," *New York Daily News*, May 14, 1941; Hy Turkin, "Wyatt Hurls Dodgers to First Place Tie, 6-0" *New York Daily News*, June 4, 1941; "Baseball School Opens at Cardines," *Newport (R.I.)*

Mercury, July 23, 1943. I found only one news account that reported Nahem throwing either “submarine” or “underhand”. According to Bill Dooley, “Jeepers-Peepers! It’s a Spectacle On Phils—Trio of Tossers Who Work Behind Specs,” *Sporting News*, June 4, 1941, Nahem used “an underhand delivery, letting the ball go from somewhere around his knees.”

112. John Kiernan, “Warm Words From Onkel Franz Frisch,” *New York Times*, May 5, 1941; https://www.baseball-reference.com/bullpen/Sam_Nahem; <http://www.retrosheet.org/boxesetc/N/Lnahes1010.htm>; <https://www.baseball-reference.com/players/split.fcgi?id=nahemsao1&year=Career&t=p>; Rob Neyer, “Hot Corner Book Club—After WW2 the Big One,” *SB Nation*, April 3, 2013, <https://www.sbnation.com/2013/4/3/4178784/hot-corner-book-club-after-ww2-the-big-one>

113. Ephross with Abramowitz, *Jewish Major Leaguers in Their Own Words*.

114. Roberts and Rogers, *The Whiz Kids*, 148.

115. Ephross with Abramowitz, *Jewish Major Leaguers in Their Own Words*.

116. Ephross with Abramowitz, *Jewish Major Leaguers in Their Own Words*.

117. Ephross with Abramowitz, *Jewish Major Leaguers in Their Own Words*.

118. Roberts and Rogers, *The Whiz Kids*, 147

119. Roberts and Rogers, *The Whiz Kids*, 147

120. Santiago Llorens, “Howell, Cincy Draftee, Stars in Puerto Rico,” *Sporting News*, November 24, 1948.

121. “Bushwicks Take Twin Bill,” *New York Times*, June 27, 1949

122. “Sam Nahem Marries New York Commercial Artist,” *Newport Mercury*, June 10, 1949.

123. “Boston Colored Giants Outscore Stars, 6-4,” *Newport Mercury*, August 12, 1949

124. “Sam Nahem Marries New York Commercial Artist,” *Newport Mercury*, June 10, 1949.

125. “List of Designations for the Primaries Due on Aug. 22,” *New York Times*, July 19, 1950

126. Ephross with Abramowitz, *Jewish Major Leaguers in Their Own Words*.

127. “Sam Nahem Marries New York Commercial Artist,” *Newport Mercury*, June 10, 1949.

128. In early 2018, Nahem’s son Ivan requested copies of his father’s FBI file. The FBI sent him eleven pages of his father’s file and indicated that other records had been destroyed. Among the records sent to Ivan Nahem, a memo from the FBI’s San Francisco office dated October 31, 1960 indicates the Nahem was under surveillance at least since January 1956. (It is likely that the FBI was tracking him before that, when he was still living in New York). The memo notes that Nahem was a member of the Communist Party and that he was an elected member of the Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers union’s safety committee at the Standard Oil plant in Richmond. It appears

that the FBI was trying to determine if Nahem's membership in the Communist Party and his leadership position in the union violated the union's bylaws.

129. Joel Isaacs, email message to author, November 26, 2017.

130. Beladee Nahem Griffiths, email message to author, January 7, 2018.

131. Sam Bernstein, email message to author, 2018

132. Nahem, "The Autobiography."