
Southern Connecticut mensa Chronicle

SCHEDULE OF CHAPTER EVENTS FOR JANUARY

Wednesday, January 10, 7:00. Southern Connecticut and Connecticut/Western Massachusetts Joint Dinner. This regular dinner is now being held the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the Old Sorrento Restaurant, Newtown Road, Danbury, CT. Interested Mensans should contact Ward Mazzucco at (203) 744-1929, ext. 25, wjm@danburylaw.com, or Rev. Bill Loring at (203) 794-1389.

Saturday, Jan. 20, 7:00. Monthly dinner, Three Door Restaurant, 1775 Madison Ave., Bridgeport. New Members Dinner - Southern CT Mensa extends a special invitation to new members. Hal Meyer, inventor, entrepreneur and technology broker with The Hook Appropriate Technology company and past president of the Danbury inventor's group The Innovators Guild, will speak on "*How to Commercialize An Invention.*"

Please call Lee Steuber at 203-730-1634 for information and reservations. Dinner is \$10.00 and includes everything but the cash bar. Dress is casual and guests are welcome.

Saturday, Jan. 27, 8:15. THEATRE EVENT: A Party to Murder, at the Clockwork Repertory Theatre, 133 Main St., Oakville, CT., 06779 Six people arrive in secret at an island to play a murder mystery game that turns out to be no game. Tickets are \$13. For info or reservations, please call Jim Mizera at (203) 332-2548 or e-mail Jmizera@hotmail.com, preferably before Monday, Jan. 22.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF CHAPTER EVENTS FOR FEBRUARY

Wednesday, Feb. 14, 7:00. Southern Connecticut and Connecticut/Western Massachusetts Joint Dinner. See above listing for details.

Saturday, Feb. 17, 7:00. Monthly dinner, Three Door Restaurant, 1775 Madison Ave., Bridgeport.

Saturday, Feb. 24, 8:00. Jean Anouilh's Antigone, performed by the Renaissance Theatre Company's Actors' Ensemble, at Tabor Lutheran Church Hall, 45 Tabor Dr., Branford, CT. (www.actorsensemble.com). Anouilh's 1942 retelling of Sophocles' 5th century B.C. tragedy. Tickets are \$10. For info or reservations, please call Jim Mizera at (203) 332-2548 or e-mail Jmizera@hotmail.com

FALL 2001 NOTICE

The Connecticut Association for the Gifted needs people who are willing to teach youngsters in grades K-8 for their Minds in Motion classes tentatively planned for October, 2001, at Danbury High School. The CAG, a non-profit organization, sponsors classes in subjects such as rocketry, chess, math, drama, dance, the environment, art, and foreign languages. If you are interested or want more information, please call Susan Chapman at 778-0194 or Chris Cuhnick at 778-0002.

Connecticut at a Glance

The Largest 25 Connecticut Municipalities - 1998

| | | <u>Population</u> |
|----|---------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Bridgeport | 137,425 |
| 2 | Hartford | 131,523 |
| 3 | New Haven | 123,189 |
| 4 | Stamford | 110,689 |
| 5 | Waterbury | 105,346 |
| 6 | Norwalk | 78,064 |
| 7 | New Britain | 70,492 |
| 8 | Danbury | 65,829 |
| 9 | Bristol | 59,158 |
| 10 | Greenwich | 58,332 |
| 11 | Meriden | 56,667 |
| 12 | West Hartford | 55,951 |
| 13 | Fairfield | 53,740 |
| 14 | Hamden | 53,011 |
| 15 | Manchester | 51,657 |
| 16 | West Haven | 51,639 |
| 17 | Milford | 50,027 |
| 18 | Stratford | 48,857 |
| 19 | East Hartford | 47,369 |
| 20 | Middletown | 43,640 |
| 21 | Enfield | 43,099 |
| 22 | Groton | 41,284 |
| 23 | Wallingford | 40,998 |
| 24 | Southington | 38,683 |
| 25 | Shelton | 37,873 |

County Populations

| | <u>Population</u> | <u>Population per sq. mile</u> |
|-------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Fairfield | 838,362 | 1,323 |
| Hartford | 828,200 | 1,148 |
| New Haven | 793,504 | 1,331 |
| New London | 245,740 | 383 |
| Litchfield | 181,277 | 193 |
| Middlesex | 150,034 | 393 |
| Tolland | 131,831 | 315 |
| Windham | 105,121 | 201 |
| STATE TOTAL | 3,274,069 | 679 |

UNITED STATES POPULATION TRENDS10 Largest Metro Areas in 1998, by 1998 Population
(All are Metropolitan Statistical Areas)

| Rank | Metropolitan Area | 1998 Population | 1990-1998 %Change |
|------|---|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, N.Y.-N.J.-Conn.-Pa. | 20,124,377 | 2.9 |
| 2 | Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County, Calif. | 15,781,273 | 8.6 |
| 3 | Chicago-Gary-Kenosha, Ill.-Ind.-Wis. | 8,809,846 | 6.9 |
| 4 | Washington-Baltimore, D.C.-Md.-Va.-W.Va. | 7,285,206 | 8.3 |
| 5 | San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose, Calif. | 6,816,047 | 8.6 |
| 6 | Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md. | 5,988,348 | 1.6 |
| 7 | Boston-Worcester-Lawrence, Mass.-N.H.-Maine-Conn. | 5,633,060 | 3.3 |
| 8 | Detroit-Ann Arbor-Flint, Mich. | 5,457,583 | 5.2 |
| 9 | Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas | 4,802,463 | 19.0 |
| 10 | Houston-Galveston-Brazoria, Texas | 4,407,579 | 18.1 |

10 Fastest-Growing Metro Areas, by Population

| Rank | Metropolitan Area | 1998 Pop. | 1990-1998 %Change |
|------|--------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| 1 | Las Vegas, Nev.-Ariz. | 1,321,546 | 55.0 |
| 2 | Laredo, Tex. | 188,166 | 41.2 |
| 3 | McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, Tex. | 522,204 | 36.2 |
| 4 | Boise City, Idaho | 395,953 | 33.8 |
| 5 | Naples, Fla. | 199,436 | 31.1 |
| 6 | Phoenix-Mesa, Ariz. | 2,931,004 | 30.9 |
| 7 | Austin-San Marcos, Tex. | 1,105,909 | 30.7 |
| 8 | Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, Ark. | 272,616 | 29.3 |
| 9 | Wilmington, N.C. | 218,248 | 27.4 |
| 10 | Provo-Orem, Utah | 335,635 | 27.3 |

ECONOMIC ESTIMATES FOR 2001

| | Recent Historical Data (% Change) | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|------|------|-------------|------|-----|
| | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 (est.) | | |
| U.S. Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.2 | 5.2 | | |
| Consumer Price Index (CPI) | 2.3 | 1.6 | 2.2 | 3.3 | | |
| | | | | | 2001 | |
| | | | | | GDP | CPI |
| Bank of Montreal | | | | | 1.9 | |
| John Beggs www.johnbeggs.com | | | | | 3.0 | 2.8 |
| Bond Market Association | | | | | 3.1 | 2.6 |
| The Dismal Scientist www.dismal.com | | | | | 3.3 | 2.5 |
| The Economist poll | | | | | 3.3 | 3.0 |
| First Union | | | | | 3.1 | 2.4 |
| Kiplinger Letter | | | | | 2.5 | |
| Natl. Assoc. of Business Economists (NABE) | | | | | 3.4 | 2.6 |
| OECD | | | | | 3.5 | |
| Philadelphia Fed Survey | | | | | 3.1 | 2.8 |
| Purchasing Magazine | | | | | 3.4 | |
| Toronto Dominion Bank | | | | | 3.0 | 2.8 |
| United Babson | | | | | 2.5 | 2.6 |
| UCLA Anderson School of Business | | | | | 1.1 | 2.7 |
| Univ. of Chicago | | | | | 2.5 | 3.3 |
| Dr. Edward Yardeni, Deutsche Bank | | | | | 4.2 | 2.0 |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 2002 | |
| | | | | | GDP | CPI |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 3.7 | 2.5 |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 3.4 | 2.0 |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 2.2 | 2.5 |
| | | | | | | |

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KEEPING TRACK OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE HUMAN

By Gerard Brooker

For a few years now I have been running on the tracks of the Greater Danbury area. During that period I kept track, no, kept a list, of conversations that I could hear of any two or more people walking or running together. Perhaps I am a bit of a social voyeur; or simply curious, or trying to keep from being bored doing what is quintessentially a boring act, running.

I realized in collecting my notes that they corroborated a long-held assumption that women talk about relationships and men about things.

For example, two fourteen-year-old girls: one asks, "Does your dad really care about you mom's feelings?" The other answers, "No, does yours?" "Yes, he asks her how she's doing and they talk." The other responds, "My dad says 'you forgot to get the tissues,' and uses that to rank on her for everything."

On the track that same day were several young men who were talking about a military battle (I don't know which one. Slowing down to listen gives me away) which they called a "loss:loss."

In a clear example of being relational about things, women who seemed to be in her twenties, told her female running mate that she wanted to take a higher-level course that would cost about \$650. Alas, when she proposed this to her husband, he became upset, saying "We make \$60,000 a year and have nothing to show for it." With a bit of sarcastic humor, and with an eye not so much on things but on value, she said back to him, "We'll look at the check book. I suppose I'm squandering our money."

Sarcasm was not missing from men's conversations. Point in hand: one man asked another if his wife also walked two miles a day. "Yes," he said, "but only if there is someone to listen to her. She has an answer for everything."

Indeed, women seem to be smart at getting what they want. At least, they seem to be less aggressive at it than men. A 60-ish woman told her female friends that she soothes her husband by wearing her hair "the way he likes it." Cute or manipulative? I don't know. Remember, my rule is to keep running lest I give away my cover.

I could tell, though, that not all women aim to please their men by absorbing their likes and dislikes. A young lady emphatically told her female running mate, "I don't mind when he tells me what to do. I do mind when he stands over me and tells me how to do it."

Yes, male macho seems to come out on the track. Two young men talked about a rogue nation giving us some trouble. The conversation about that topic ended when the one said: "Nuke 'em off the map." Period.

Men on the track are sometimes downright condescending about women. Referring to his wife, one jogger said, "My wife's opinions are always suspect. I read books and magazines. She reads Star and Esquire." His buddy agreed, with that knowing laugh of support. Another woman, on a different day and in a different context, made a remark that might have applied to the reader-man. Speaking about her dead husband, she said, "What a legacy that man left." And, after a slight pause, "He was a jerk." I wondered if he had just died, perhaps jogging, and if she read Star and Esquire.

I noticed, too, that humor does not take a holiday on the track. One woman seemed to be always at the track when I was there. I began to be taken with her persistence in walking, head down and silver-salted. She seemed like a walking thought to me, and I began to wonder what those deep thoughts might be. One early evening I was walking about ten yards behind her. I think she didn't know I was there. At least I hope so. Her loud and prolonged flatulence disillusioned me. Perhaps it wasn't deep thought at all. Heck of a way to say hi.

Walking the track is such a natural exercise. It often revealed to me what it means to be human. Like the little girl who told her mom, busily engaged in conversation with her grown-up companion, that she loved her. As simple as that: "Mommy, I love you." Simply back, her mom said, "I love you, too." It was all so freely given and freely received.

So human. The two-year old, curious about me but not daring to stray from her father's side; the man who said that he walked four miles a day, yet couldn't lose any weight, while confessing that he hasn't changed his eating habits for a long time; the lady who told about her neighbor chasing her unfaithful husband with a knife to the safety of the

underbelly of the family car. She estimated that “he’d have to live under that car for the rest of his life.”

The college student who kicked the goal posts and then timed their vibrations with a stop watch. And the old couple who completed each other’s sentences. Was it ennui? Or did they, too, vibrate in understanding with each other?

There was the old and slow man who tried to engage me in conversation. But I had to get on with my life. I wonder now what wisdom I might have gained from him if I had just slowed down a bit; or what comfort a few minutes of companionship might have given to him.

The young asthmatic who insisted on running, working hard for air and holding onto her side, taught me something about courage, or perhaps commitment. Maybe both.

There was the lady who yearned for snow, and her partner who didn’t want any.

How different we each are shows up in lots of ways, even on the track. The two early-teen girls flirting with an equally young boy who seemed like he simply wanted to run. “We love you,” they shouted after him. I didn’t know if his sudden burst of speed was used to propel him away from the embarrassment or if the compliments gave him winged flight.

Even the Joan Crawford-ish mother shows up on the track. She warned her tiny-legged three year old daughter not to step on her feet because “You know that makes mother angry.” I looked for a hanger tucked into the sweats.

And the anguish. One afternoon I heard a young lady confide to her friend that she’d been betrayed again recently by the same person. With a sense of resignation, she said, “Life sucks.” Sometimes. Indeed.

It can, though, be brought to terms, I suspect by whatever goes on inside us about it. There is a very old lady who sometimes hangs around one of the tracks. She doesn’t run and doesn’t jog. Too old for either. She cleans up the junk that people leave around. Bottles, bags, cans, wrappers. After we got to be acquaintances, I’d like to think friends, I learned that Elizabeth had cleaned up a lot of human junk in her long life. She never let it break her. She said that scooping and bending sometimes were very good exercises. Seeing how full of aliveness she was, I agreed as to how I’d take a look at that.

One day I decided that I didn’t want to take notes any more because doing it was keeping me from entering into the companionship of the track. I figured that if I was a part of a conversation and then took notes to write about it, the practise would take a turn towards borderline unethical behavior. Unless, that is, I told them what I was up to and asked for their permission. In that case, I probably would get perfectly proper dialogue which wouldn’t tell me much about what it means to be human. No more laughs, no more pain. Not for me. No more looking in from the outside. I have learned that it is more interesting to keep track of conversations that I am a part of. So, that’s it. That’s very it.

If you wish to submit material, please write or e-mail Jim Mizera at PMB #181, 7365 Main St., Stratford, CT. 06614-1300, Jmizera@hotmail.com. E-mail submissions are preferred. Please include your name, address, and telephone number. Anonymous material will be rejected, although names will be withheld on request. Items will be returned if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Currently, the deadline for postal submissions is the 15th of the month preceding publication, and the 20th of the month for e-mail submissions.

THE MOZART EFFECT RE-EXAMINED

In a 1993 experiment at the University of California at Irvine, Frances Rauscher and colleagues found that college students listening to Mozart before the performance of spatial IQ tasks showed brief but significant increases in their performance. The result, although only reported in a short article in *Nature*, caught the attention of reporters nationwide, and was quickly dubbed the "Mozart effect." Now, however, the concept is under attack after researchers at other universities failed to replicate the Rauscher team's results.

In her paper on the Mozart effect, Rauscher wrote "We performed an experiment in which students were given three sets of standard I.Q. spatial reasoning tasks". These consisted of paper folding and cutting, plus two other "abstract/spatial reasoning tasks." "Each task was preceded by ten minutes of [either] (1) listening to Mozart's sonata for two pianos in D major, (2) listening to a relaxation tape, or (3) silence. . . .The I.Q.s of subjects participating in the music condition were 8-9 points above their I.Q. scores in the two other conditions." The theory behind the study was that the sonata activated the same neural circuitry in the brain that is used in spatial reasoning. The improvement lasted only about ten minutes.

In the August 25, 1999 issue of *Nature*, psychology professor Keith Humphrey published the results of his replication of the Mozart experiment. Humphrey found no difference in performance between the students who listened to Mozart before the test and those who listened to relaxation music or no music at all. Similar experiments at the University of Montreal and at Appalachian State University in North Carolina turned up negative results as well, and were combined with Humphrey's study in the *Nature* article. Even more damaging to Rauscher's theory was a review of experiments on the subject by Christopher F. Chabris, a research fellow at Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School. He examined 16 previous studies involving 714 subjects that compared the IQ-boosting effects of the Mozart recording. The result: Statistically insignificant increases in the ability to complete tasks requiring spatial visualization skills and abstract reasoning. Chabris concluded, "The improvement is smaller than the average variation of a single person's I.Q. test performance."

Chabris also criticized the scope of Rauscher's claims and her team's methodology. He pointed out that the short three-column article in *Nature* stated that Mozart improved performance on "abstract/spatial reasoning tasks" on the Standard-Binet tests and an I.Q. increase of 8-9 points when it in fact showed only an improvement on one of three spatial tasks. In attacking Rauscher's methods, Prof. Chabris pointed to a more rigorous experiment conducted by Joan Newman and colleagues and published in 1995 in *The Journal of Perceptual and Motor Skills*. Newman did both a pre-test and a post-test of reasoning abilities of students subjected to the same stimuli as in the original experiment and found no special improvement from listening to Mozart.

In response to these challenges, Prof. Rauscher clarified one point and conceded another. First, she took pains to state that she had never claimed that Mozart boosted general intelligence as reported in some stories, which portrayed Mozart as Gatorade for the mind. Second, she admitted that the post-Mozart increase in spatial performance occurred on just one of the three Stanford-Binet tasks, while on the others, varying the listening condition made no difference. Only "spatiotemporal" tasks, which require the transformation of visualized images over time, are affected by complex music, not spatial ability or reasoning in general.

Rauscher has defended this revised thesis with results from extended experiments she performed in 1995. In the main follow-up experiment, the same tasks were tested but the relaxation music was replaced by a minimalist work by Phillip Glass. In a sub-study, other students listened to a taped short story or dance music. Once again, only the Mozart group did significantly better on the spatiotemporal IQ tests, indicating that the boost was specific to Mozart rather than to music per se. Prof. Rauscher, now at the University of Wisconsin, also noted that rats exposed to the Mozart sonata, while in the uterus and for 60 days after birth, learned to run mazes faster and with fewer errors than litter mates who had not heard the music.

Independent support for the Mozart effect also appeared. Lois Hetland of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, took Prof. Chabris's statistical study a step further, including not only experiments that compared Mozart against silence, but against other compositions as well. Hetland, who was agnostic about the Mozart Effect, found that Mozart listeners outperformed other groups more often than could be explained by chance, although the effect was modest. Another skeptic, psychologist Eric Seigel at Elmhurst College, Illinois, also produced experimental evidence for the Mozart effect using a different spatial reasoning test. Coupled with positive results on tests given to Alzheimer and epileptic patients, this seemed to strengthen the case for a Mozart effect.

The contrasting results of the many tests have put psychologists to work on new tests that will try to filter out the effects of novelty, mood, musical tastes and training, and try to quantify the variations in musical compositions and their specific effects. Observers say this will determine whether there will be an encore or requiem for the Mozart effect.

Is It Fair or Foul? -- You Make the Decision

By Hal Lebovitz

(Reprinted from the Cleveland Plain Dealer)

A batted ball - baseball or softball - often bounces funny, and when it does, it eventually must be called fair or foul.

The fair-foul rule, perhaps the most basic in the game, is unclear to countless fans. And many who think they know the rule really don't.

To clear the confusion, we have devised a "fair-foul" test. Let's see how well you do on it. Call the following plays by underlining what you consider to be the correct answers. Remember, in each case we're talking about a batted ball:

Play No. 1 - The ball first bounces in foul territory at Point A, hits a pebble, bounces into fair territory at Point B and is fielded there. FAIR or FOUL?

Play No. 2 - The ball hits at Point A in fair territory, but spins into foul territory and comes to rest, or is touched, at Point B.

Play No. 3 - The ball hits at Point A, in foul territory, spins forward and comes to rest directly on home plate.

Play No. 4 - A batted ball hits the batter's leg while he is in the batter's box, bounces into fair territory and is fielded there.

Play No. 5 - A runner takes his lead off third base in foul territory. A line drive hits him and then bounces fair, where it is fielded.

Play No. 6 - Runner is standing on third, one leg on the base and the other in foul territory. Ground ball hits the leg that is on the base.

Play No. 7 - A line drive hits the pitcher's rubber without touching a player, caroms into foul territory between home and third and bounces into the seats.

Play No. 8 - Ball rolls directly along the foul line, touches a corner of the base and then rolls foul, never passing the bag.

Play No. 9 - Ball bounces in front of the base at Point A, crosses directly over the bag and lands in foul territory beyond the bag.

Play No. 10 - Line drive zooms over third base in fair territory but lands in foul territory beyond the bag.

Play No. 11 - Ball hits fair at Point A, spins foul, hits a pebble at Point B, comes back into the diamond, crossing directly over the bag and comes to rest at Point C.

Play No. 12 - Ball rolls inside the foul line, then at Point A dips into foul territory before reaching the bag, but after it passes behind the bag, it hits a pebble at Point B and goes fair again, settling at Point C.

Play No. 13 - Third baseman, standing in fair territory, reaches out into foul territory and touches a line drive which is definitely on the foul side of the line.

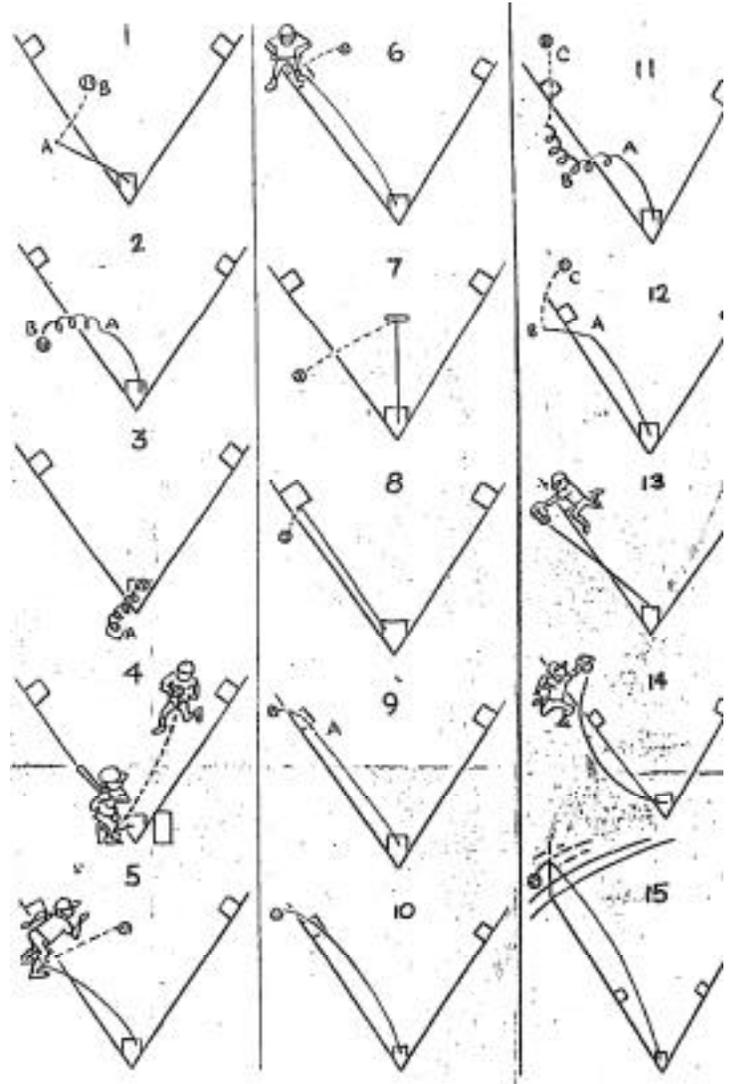
Answers: Here's the definition of a **FAIR BALL**: One that "settles on fair ground between home and first base, OR that is on or over fair territory when bounding to the outfield past first base or third base, OR that touches first or third base, OR that first falls on fair territory on or beyond first or third base, OR that first falls on fair territory on or beyond first or third base, OR that, while on or over fair territory, touches the person of an umpire or player.

NOTES: A fair fly ball shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, not whether the fielder is in fair or foul territory at the time he touches it. A key word in the above definition is "settles." Thus, on all calls between the plate and the base, it makes no difference where the ball first hits. It must be judged on where it finally comes to rest. Also remember these 3 things: A pebble is part of the natural ground, just as the grass is. Home plate is in fair territory, and so are the foul lines. The foul line is merely an extension of the foul line.

Thus, Plays 1, 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 14, and 15 are **FAIR** balls. Plays 2, 4, 5, 7, 10, 12 and 13 are **FOUL**. If you're an umpire and got less than 100%, you flunked.

Play No. 14 - Left fielder goes into foul territory for a fly. At the last second the wind carries it into fair territory. While standing in foul territory, he reaches into fair territory to touch the ball.

Play No. 15 - Ball hits left field foul pole and bounces into stands in foul territory.



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(Monthly)

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