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and a 4,000th Hit Nobody Cared to Remember

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# Ahab in the Batter's Box

*Pete Rose, the Montreal Expos, and a  
4,000th Hit Nobody Cared to Remember*

JASON WINDERS

Certainly unlike any sport, perhaps even unlike any other corner of popular culture, baseball communicates in numbers.<sup>1</sup> We identify players not simply by name but by associated numbers—be they worn on a player's back or accumulated during the course of a game or career. It's not a matter of math but emotion. While the numbers 3, 4, and 5 mean the world to a New York Yankees fan, they will never add up to 6 for a St. Louis Cardinals fan.<sup>2</sup> When reviewing a season or career, the game pauses for significant round numbers, symbolic barriers of greatness—20 and 300, 50 and 500, 200 and 3,000. These round numbers may not be destinations, only mileposts on the path to greater, although admittedly not as beautiful, numbers—be they iconic (Joe DiMaggio and 56) or controversial (Barry Bonds and 762). They give us pause because, as humans, we must take notice.<sup>3</sup> This paper explores one of baseball's great round numbers—4,000—thirty years later, and it also looks into what factors went into the virtual erasing of Pete Rose's 4,000th career hit and, in turn, tenure from Montreal Expos franchise history.

Reaching the all-time record was not inevitable. In 1984, an aging Rose was running on fumes; and as few teams were in the market for a sideshow, he was slipping through the cracks. If not for the Expos, he may not have played that season, which means, given less than three years of career left (only 312 career games for Rose remained), Cobb's record would have stood. Simply stated, Rose would not have achieved that mark without Montreal taking a chance on him—ultimately a failed one for the team. Despite that, little academic or journalistic discussion exists on that historic day or, larger still, Rose's brief but important tenure with the team. At a minimum, baseball should provide breadcrumbs for spotty memories to follow back in time. When we lose or disregard a piece, it degrades the overall story.

Members of the baseball community participate in many activities designed to actively remember and reconstruct the past. Players' jersey numbers are retired and "turn-back-the-clock" games are held. Teams honor highly revered players by erecting

statues of them in or around ballparks. Players will often wear a patch on their uniform to publicly recognize and honor a teammate who has recently passed away. Like individuals in other institutionalized fields of cultural production, those who comprise the “baseball world” participate in rituals, subscribe to magazines and belong to organizations dedicated to the game’s history.<sup>4</sup>

Expos lore is different from that of the Yankees or Dodgers, teams focused on a rich history of success, tradition, and larger-than-life superstars. The Expos’ short history and, particularly, inglorious end have magnified every aspect of the organization’s past. Just look to Marc Robitaille and Jacques Doucet’s two-volume, 1,200-page history of the Expos, *Il était une fois les Expos*, as an example of its history’s exquisite excess. For comparison, a recently released four hundredth-anniversary edition of the *King James Bible* has only 1,510 pages.

Despite its baseball significance, Rose’s tenure on Pierre de Coubertin Avenue was not only frequently ridiculed at the time by media—who chose to view it as a footnote, at best, and a management stunt, at worst—but it has been all but forgotten by historians today. “Who can forget that Pete Rose passed through Montreal in 1984 on his way to baseball notoriety?” wrote Danny Gallagher and Bill Young in their 300-page love letter to the organization, *Remembering the Montreal Expos*.<sup>5</sup>

My answer: seemingly everyone.

When discussion in this paper depends on primary sources, I center my case on the reporting of the *Montreal Gazette* and *La Presse*, between the months of January and August 1984, using news stories and opinion pieces (columns and cartoons) from the news and sports sections as well as photographs and page design—all of which combine to show how those in the moment saw Rose and his 4,000th hit. When discussion broadens to secondary sources, I lean on one-on-one interviews with three historians who have had the final words on the franchise—Jacques Doucet, Marc Robitaille, and Alain Usereau. Their books have come to define Expos history, including the Rose era. The paper is informed by contextual background drawn from just prior to Rose’s arrival with the Expos and just after his departure as well as by overall reaction to Rose’s time in Montreal.

Bill Young, founder of the SABR (Society of American Baseball Researchers)–Quebec Chapter and as quotable a soul as you can find on the Expos, summed up the feeling of fans this way:

Many of us still remember how the Expos were frog-marched out of Montreal following the 2004 season by their unfeeling owners—the consortium that is Major League Baseball. . . .

As any Expos fan worth his or her salt can tell you, the flight from Montreal was unnecessary. Had the self-serving lords of the game exercised even a smidgen of patience and good will, the franchise, the first ever beyond the borders of the United States, could have remained at home.

But the Grand Poobahs had a different agenda. And they had the money—so that was that.

Within Quebec, the first reaction was one of loss—and sorrow. The 32,000 who attended the final game at Olympic Stadium . . . are proof of that. By the time the doors were closed for the last time and the lights turned off, the place was awash in tears.

Bitterness followed, of course, and much as did the faithful in Brooklyn when their beloved Bums were summarily dispatched to Los Angeles, Expos fans turned their backs on baseball as well. The team that once held Rusty Staub and Andre Dawson close to the heart, and Gary Carter and Steve Rogers, Pedro Martinez and Vladimir Guerrero, was no longer.

And we could care less [*sic*], or so we liked to pretend.<sup>6</sup>

These are fans of great passion and long memories, so why no love for Rose?

#### HOW'S THAT FOR OPENERS

Rose stood on second base with a penultimate piece of history now behind him, an all-time mark within sight, and off-the-field infamy still to come. Opening day in Montreal. Friday, April 13, 1984. On a 1-1 count in the fourth inning, Rose took an up-and-away fastball from Phillies pitcher Jerry Koosman and sliced it into the right-field corner for his 4,000th career hit. It came exactly twenty-one years to the day from his first hit—April 13, 1963. Rose always loved a big stage, and there hadn't been a bigger one in Montreal baseball in some time. Attendance for the game was 48,060. Opening day brought 40,088 in 1983 and would bring 30,930 in 1985. Neither of those openers, however, featured Pete Rose.<sup>7</sup> The crowd was so large in 1984 that the start of the game was delayed thirty minutes as fans continued to make their way into the ballpark from the ticket booths. Leading off for the Expos in the bottom of the first, Rose was played to the plate by the stadium organist with the sounds of “La Vie en Rose.” The crowd swelled, only to see Rose swing at the first pitch and ground out to second base. In the second inning, he reached on an error. Then in the fourth, he connected with history.<sup>8</sup> Rose heard the Olympic Stadium crowd. Phillies right fielder Joe Lefebvre tossed the ball to short-stop Ivan DeJesus, who handed it Rose. He then trotted toward the Expos' dugout, catching a glimpse of teammates who had joined the ovation.<sup>9</sup> Hon-

estly, he was disappointed they hadn't come onto the field to shake his hand as Reds teammates had done when Rose broke Stan Musial's NL hits record three years earlier. But he didn't let it show. He handed the ball to hitting coach Billy DeMars at the first base line and then returned to second.<sup>10</sup> The applause lasted for more than two minutes, although it was the second-longest ovation of the day. The longest belonged to Quebec-born speed skater Gaetan Boucher. The Olympic hero, who had just won two gold medals in the Sarajevo Winter Games two months prior, threw out the ceremonial first pitch. "The ovation was special to me because I am new here," Rose said after the game. "The last time I played here, I got booed. When you have the reaction I got today, you get goose bumps and you want to do something special for these people." In classic Rose fashion, when the applause died down and play resumed, he scored from second on a pop fly to shallow center after an off-balance Hayes couldn't get the ball back into the infield quickly enough to beat the constantly chugging Rose, one day removed from his forty-third birthday.<sup>11</sup>

How Rose came to be standing there at second base and how those who would control the narrative of that moment going forward viewed how he came to be standing there would dictate the moment's place in team history. Few historians disagree the hit was an important baseball moment on the way to a historic achievement. But if Montreal sportswriters and team historians are to be believed, Rose's 4,000th hit—and his overall tenure with the team—was not a memorable one for Montreal.

#### FREE AGENT DESPERATION

Rose came up with the Reds in 1963, a hometown switch hitter with a flair for the dramatic. He won the Rookie of the Year Award that year. Rose would get his 1,000th hit in 1968, his 2,000th in 1973, and his 3,000th in 1978. All those marks were set with the Reds.<sup>12</sup> When he signed with the Expos in 1984, free agency wasn't totally unfamiliar for Rose. He went through the process one time previously, in 1978, following his most memorable season on the national stage. A November 1978 *Sports Illustrated* article captured Rose's confidence perfectly.<sup>13</sup> The article opened with a description of a photo shoot, one where the superstar was trying on the hats of his different potential suitors. The hamming-it-up Hamlet fired off quick reactions to the various landing points. "OK, Pete. The California Angels. What do you think of?" "Gene Autry," Rose grinned, baring the gap in his front teeth. "Maybe he'll give me his horse if I sign. What was the name of that horse? Champion? Champion!" Click.<sup>14</sup> He was cocky. He was exasperating. He was an almost cartoonish version Pete Rose, as if Pete Rose weren't already a bit of a cartoon to begin with.

But he had reason to be. Despite his advancing age for the game, thirty-eight by the time the 1978 season started, Rose was the cream of the free agent crop. In 1977, he hit .302, had 198 hits, scored 103 runs, and captivated the country with a 44-game hitting streak that challenged another of the great numbers—DiMaggio's 56.<sup>15</sup>

On October 2, 1978, Dick Wagner, Reds president and chief executive officer, met with Rose and his agent-attorney Reuben Katz. Wagner offered Rose a raise; Rose turned him down. "He didn't even make me a counterproposal," Wagner told *Sports Illustrated*. "I asked him what he was thinking in terms of, and he and Katz threw phrases at me like, 'The sky's the limit.'"<sup>16</sup> On December 5, 1978, Rose signed to a four-year, \$3.2 million contract with the Philadelphia Phillies, making him the highest-paid athlete in team sports.<sup>17</sup> He would be among the first handful of free agents signed that year.

During the course of the contract, the team went to three division titles, two World Series appearances, and its first-ever title in 1980. The final year of his contract, 1983, was the worst of Rose's career. He hit .245 with 121 hits and was benched toward the end of the season. Rose returned to form in the postseason, hitting .375 (6 for 16) during the NL playoffs against the Los Angeles Dodgers and .312 during the World Series (5 for 16) against the eventual-champion Baltimore Orioles.<sup>18</sup> After a slow start in the series—1 hit in his first 8 at bats—Phillies manager Paul Owens benched Rose for Game Three.

Following the season, Rose was released from the team, even though the team wanted to retain him, only in a more limited role, a fate Rose would never agree to. This time in free agency, however, Rose faced a far different landscape. He wasn't joking around in front of *Sports Illustrated* cameras anymore. The Reds, always seen as a backup plan, were expressing no interest. Katz mentioned the Chicago White Sox as an option and explored some lukewarm interest from the Angels and Seattle Mariners.<sup>19</sup> The latter's owner, George Argyros, loved the attention-grabbing free agents. He signed pitcher Gaylord Perry in 1982 in a blatant attempt to piggyback on the attention given to Perry's pursuit of his 300th win. Argyros, again seeing butts in the seats for the franchise seven years removed from its first game, explored signing Rose for his run at Cobb. But even Argyros was talked out of it.<sup>20</sup> Katz considered Rose signing with the Yomiuri Giants in Japan all but ending the chase for Cobb.<sup>21</sup> Rose went unsigned through Christmas and well into January.<sup>22</sup> Then the Expos came calling. On January 20, 1984, the Expos signed Rose to a one-year contract worth \$500,000. "Money is not an issue," Expos president and general manager John McHale told the *Montreal Gazette* on January 18. "It isn't with us and I am sure it isn't with Pete. He's certainly a newsworthy guy, but that shouldn't be part of our decision."<sup>23</sup> Rose, like it or not, was a way to

fill a perceived void. The Expos had collapsed the previous fall. Media and fans saw it as the result of missing talent; management saw it as a matter of leadership. Enter Rose.

Not everyone bought Rose as a solution. Tim Burke of the *Montreal Gazette* called the Rose signing “the most elaborate smokescreen since Captain Fogarty Fagan, V.C., of the *Jervis Bay*, won immortality sacrificing his vessel to a German battleship to save a convoy. Signing up Pete Rose was a lovely way to camouflage the front-office inertia which followed the debacle of last September,” he wrote. “They have done little to change the major components of a club, which has swooned in the late September divisional race in all but one of the past five years, their won-loss record declining with each successive season. With memories of past blunders in the marketplace haunting them, management just couldn’t bring themselves to make that blockbuster deal.”<sup>24</sup>

Michael Farber, also of the *Gazette*, was softer in his criticism even though he wrote, “the best thing you can say about the Rose signing is it came five years late.” Farber pointed out that the last time Rose played every day in left field, Richard Nixon was “trying to stay off the employment lines” and Michael Jackson was “a cute midget with a squeaky voice.” Rose eventually played first base when the team traded first baseman Al Oliver. “Well, now the Expos have a hole in their heads to match the hole in their ball park,” Farber wrote.<sup>25</sup>

At the time of the signing, Michel Blanchard of *La Presse* likened Rose to royalty, hockey royalty. “The best comparison you can make about Rose is to associate him with the name Maurice Richard,” Blanchard wrote. “Richard never cheated, and Rose seems to be in that same form. Never have two athletes hated to lose so much.”<sup>26</sup> He saw the signing as inevitable—a result of an owner’s desires and a player’s lack of options. “The Expos gave their conditions to Rose, and he did not have much of a choice since not many teams seemed interested in his services,” he wrote.<sup>27</sup> “To play a leadership role,” he continued, “the player must play and produce. But even if the Expos plan to play Rose on a regular basis, which is far from determined, he is less certain to repeat his exploits seen in his beautiful past years. Rose, as a player, is finished for all practical purposes. But he would be useful with the Expos in the well-defined role of player-manager? Are the Expos considering that?”<sup>28</sup> Overall, Blanchard echoed the sentiments of other sportswriters that day, with the exception of one point. Blanchard was the only writer who, when discussing the Expos’ “clubhouse issues,” as so many have referred to, as a reason for signing Rose, pinned it down to a racial component. “Rose is recognized as a player capable of unifying players within the team. . . . He is the one who could bring the blacks and whites together. This is perhaps the most important thing he could do.”<sup>29</sup>

The critiques were not limited to the sports pages. “So, if I get 150 hits, bat over .300 and the Expos win the pennant, then Charles Bronfman is going to name a gin after me,” a gap-mouthed Rose said in an editorial cartoon on the opinion pages of the January 21, 1984, issue of the *Gazette*. It was a funny jab at the Expos owner, who made his fortune through the Seagram Company, his family’s liquor business. Also in the cartoon is an underlying (and unexplored) cultural jab. In the cartoon, Rose held a French-to-English dictionary. It was a knowing nod to the fact that the Expos had just welcomed the most decidedly un-French person in the history of the world.

“I believe there are a lot of good things Pete can do for the club. But I just wish I knew the answer to one question: Does he have one more good year left?” McHale told the *Cincinnati Post*.<sup>30</sup> They were about to find out.

#### A ROSE BLOOMS IN SPRING

By the start of the season, many of those same sportswriters had softened their stance—perhaps it was the eternal optimism the start of the baseball season brings. “This spring there was no talk of boot camps, but rather the missing ‘X’ factor that will be supplied by Pete Rose. With his infectious enthusiasm, Charlie Hustle, it is hoped, will actually have them enjoying playing ball for a change,” Burke wrote in the *Gazette*, citing the importance of Rose breaking through the team’s “impenetrable wall of ennui.” Rose wore his familiar number 14 as an Expo, the ninth player to do so.<sup>31</sup>

Still a year before he would publish his literally game-changing *Baseball Historical Abstract*, Bill James penned an Expos’ season preview special in the *Gazette*. Without mentioning Rose, he reinforced the very reason management said they brought in Rose. James concluded, “My point is that the Expos’ problems, while they may very well have their origin in some distant, aloof intangible, do not find their way into the loss column by some mystical route. The Expos lose games because specific ballplayers fail to do specific things.”<sup>32</sup>

On April 3, 1984, Rose got his first hit with the Expos, a third-inning single on the road against the Houston Astros in Montreal’s first game of the season. In typical Rose fashion, he ran “out from under his cap while scoring the Expos’ first run.” He added a second hit before the game ended, bringing him to within eight hits of 4,000.<sup>33</sup> On April 11, 1984, Rose had his chance for 4,000 in Cincinnati, but the Reds weren’t going to grant the hometown hero his day. The Reds walked Rose four times.<sup>34</sup> Reds manager Vern Rapp balked at suggestions the team pitched around Rose intentionally, but it’s hard to ignore the fact that the Expos’ left fielder saw twenty-two pitches that day and swung at only two, one fouling off and one bouncing back to the mound. So blatant was



the effort to deny Rose his day that the hometown fans booed Reds starting pitcher Bruce Berenyi as he was pulled from the game in the fourth inning. “I’m disappointed I didn’t get the hit in front of these fans. Three quarters of them think they know me. I’ll bet half of them do,” Rose told assembled media after the game.<sup>35</sup> “Now Rose has a chance to join Ty Cobb in their exclusive club tomorrow at the Expos’ home opener against Philadelphia, another former team. ‘Carlton, is it?’ Rose asks. ‘Koosman.’ ‘Aw,’ says Rose grinning. ‘I thought it would be Carlton,’” Farber wrote in the *Gazette*. “So the bad news yesterday was Rose did not get his 4,000th hit. The good news was that he is now just five behind Frank Robinson for 14th place on the all-time walk list.”<sup>36</sup>

#### 4,000 HITS

The comparisons drive old-timers crazy. In 1995, legendary *Washington Post* columnist Shirley Povich wrote

Cobb died in 1961 at the age of 74, a broken man. But from beyond the grave he was hauled back into the news in 1985. That was when Pete Rose began making an assault on Cobb’s record of 4,191 base hits that, presumably, would be standing for all time. When the aggressive Rose did collect the tie-breaking 4,192, it was loudly hailed in terms tantamount to a New Coming. And a Feat for the Ages, prompting all the front-page news.

Yet to acclaim Rose as the new hit champion and superior to Cobb in any respect was to make even Cobb’s detractors bristle. Also none of the game’s historians was troubling himself to point out that Rose needed approximately 2,500 more times at bat, equivalent to four full seasons, to achieve Cobb’s plateau.

To compare Pete Rose with Ty Cobb is, on any basis, an insult to Cobb.<sup>37</sup>

And while Povich’s argument had holes you could drive a triple to the wall through (not the least of which is Cobb never once faced a pitcher outside his own race), the sportswriter’s wildly romanticized sentiment cannot be ignored. As he showed, baseball is often about memory more than it is about history. In a game so rich with statistics, where seemingly any point can be supported numerically if looked at from the proper angle, it is often memory—and its constant companion, nostalgia—that decides debates. So it is perhaps a tribute to the game and its timeless nature that Cobb and Rose—parallels of each other across a century of time—came to occupy the same space in baseball history. Even how they joined the two-man club of 4,000 hits echoes one another.

Cobb got his 4,000th as a member of the Philadelphia Athletics, a uniform the iconic Detroit Tiger only spent two years in at the end of his career.<sup>38</sup>

The Georgia Peach became the first player to get 4,000 hits when he doubled off Sam Gibson, a former Tiger teammate, on July 18, 1927, at Navin Field in Detroit.<sup>39</sup> Cobb entered the Baseball Hall of Fame as a member of its inaugural class in 1939. Rose got his 4,000th as a member of the Expos, a uniform the iconic Red only spent a handful of months in at the end of his career. Charlie Hustle became the second—and final—player to get 4,000 hits when he doubled off Koosman, a former Phillies teammate, on April 13, 1984, at Olympic Stadium in Montreal.<sup>40</sup> To this day, Rose has been denied entry into the Hall for gambling on baseball.

With its alumni base of two, the 4,000-hit club is among the elite career numbers. For instance, twenty-five men have hit more than 500 home runs, the benchmark of excellence prior to the steroids era; eight have hit more than 600; and three have hit more than 700. Twenty-four players have more than 300 wins; only two have more than 400 wins. Perhaps 400 wins might come closest to rivaling 4,000 hits, and certainly Cy Young's 511 career wins would be on par with Rose's career mark. Remember, when Cobb landed on the number, no man had ever recorded 4,000 career hits, in a quarter century of formalized big-league baseball. Wagner had piled up 3,430 during a twenty-one-year span; Tris Speaker, who played with Cobb on the A's in 1928, the final season for both men, finished with 3,515 over twenty-two years. But Cobb stood at his peak alone. Of course, not everyone understood the significance. "Unbelievable," said the *Detroit News*. But in its game story, the Associated Press (AP) did not report the 4,000-hit mark.<sup>41</sup>

#### THE NEXT DAY'S PAPERS

Rose rapped his 4,000th hit in the shadow of a civil war. The province's attention, perhaps even the attention of the entire nation, was focused on the Quebec Nordiques–Montreal Canadiens Final playoff match-up of the Adams Division. Billed as the "Battle of Quebec," the six-game series took pages and pages of newsprint. An editorial cartoon in the April 17, 1984, issue of the *Gazette* simply showed a hand holding a ticket to the next day's game. The caption was one word: "Gold."<sup>42</sup> This was a series, as *Atlantic Monthly* writer Andrew Cohen put it, set in the stoically Catholic province of Quebec that pitted English versus French in what "was perhaps the closest, grace a dieu, that Canada has ever come to its long-anticipated and much-feared civil war."<sup>43</sup> Rose's hit came on the same day as Game Two of that series and one week prior to the "Good Friday Massacre" in Game Six on April 20, 1984, widely considered the worst playoff brawl in NHL history, with more than 250 penalty minutes handed out in that one game alone. Coverage of Game Two domi-

nated both major Montreal newspapers the day after Rose got his hit, Saturday, April 14, 1984.<sup>44</sup> “Habs Tie Series with Nordiques,” screamed a banner headline on the *Gazette’s* sports front, which dedicated the top two-thirds of the page to the game. “Lemaire accuse les Nordiques de recourir a ‘du stuff de juniors,’” echoed *La Presse*, which gave over its entire sports front to the game.

But that’s not to say Rose’s 4,000th hit was ignored. The *Gazette* featured the hit on the front page. In fact, it was the dominant story and image above the front-page fold that day. A short story teased readers into the paper by playing up Rose’s moment. A photograph by *Gazette* photographer Todd Church, one of two *Gazette* photographers covering the game that day, showing Rose moments after the record hit, accompanied the story. A similar photo surfaced in papers across the country via wire services. Those photos are uncredited, but it is possible, given the similarity of composition and angles, that Church supplied those shots for the wire services as well. *La Presse* also featured the hit on that morning’s front page. But it shared its above-the-fold real estate with a large graphic depicting the score from the Canadiens-Nordiques game. Beneath, a small headline read, “Rose frappe son 4,000 coup sur devant 49 000 partisans”; a photo by *La Presse* photographer Pierre McConn showed Rose moments after the record hit. It was creatively cropped, quite horizontal, to bring in the catcher and umpire behind Rose’s backswing. There was no story, only a short cutline, with the photo teasing readers into the paper for more coverage. Rose found two slots on the *Gazette* sports front: a game story in the lower third of the page and an opinion piece running the length of the far-right column. The story, centered on Rose’s accomplishment, also served as the Expos’ game story.<sup>45</sup> The writer played the story straight with little fanfare. A staff photograph by Pierre Obendrauf accompanied the story. It was the most interesting of all the Rose photos run that day, capturing the reaction of teammates when Rose returned from scoring a run following his hit. That story keyed inside the section to a sidebar. Inside, readers were treated to a more colorful telling of the day.<sup>46</sup> “The Big O had a festive atmosphere for Rose’s big day,” Kappler wrote, “with bunting adorning the fences and new advertising signs on the tops of both dugouts and atop the outfield fence.”<sup>47</sup> But while Kappler’s story served as a eulogy for a perfect day, Farber’s column on the sports front performed what can only be described as the autopsy. He described a “muted” reaction to the hit. The moment’s inevitability, he contended, made it “more business-like than festive . . . less than the fulfillment of a social contract Rose has with baseball fans everywhere. They show up. He hits. Pete Rose is the ultimate quid pro quo pro.” Farber’s column was the most damning of the day, not only dictating the narrative for media treatment

in the moment but cementing Rose's place in Expos history. Farber offered the most powerful few paragraphs on the event:

The ovation was warm, but not thunderous, which it would have been were he still a Red in his hometown of Cincinnati or in Philadelphia, where reactions are more extreme. Nor was there the orgy of media coverage that once hounded Rose to a share of the league consecutive-game hitting record or often accompanies lesser mortals as they sidle up to 3,000 hits.

Rose reached 4,000 in relative privacy because the feat is cumulative. If this were not a metric society, 4,000 would mean little more than 3,953 or 4,001. . . .

Besides, it was only Rose's 10th hit as an Expo; pitcher David Palmer has two more than Rose in a Montreal uniform. After 3,999 hits, this was Rose's first coup sur. He has been leased by Montreal for a year, maybe two. He belongs less to the Expos than he does to baseball.<sup>48</sup>

Inside *La Presse*, Rose didn't make the sports front. That space belonged to hockey alone. Rose warranted one full page and parts of two other pages worth of coverage inside the section. It was the most extensive coverage by any newspaper. On page F5, readers found the largest extent of the coverage. A three-story package featuring five photos and three pullout boxes covered every angle of the day. The stories, written by *La Presse* reporter Michel Blanchard, were little more than recaps and quotes. Few opinions were offered. All shot by *La Presse* photographer Robert Mailloux, a package of photographs, positioned across at the top of the page, told the story beautifully. The first photograph mirrored McConn's photograph by bringing in umpire, catcher, and Rose. The *La Presse* shot, however, was taken from the third base side, thus bringing a bit of the Expos dugout into the background. The middle shot showed Rose standing on second base, tipping his hat to the crowd, following his record hit. The third photograph, and the only one of its kind run that day, showed Rose scoring from second on a hit by the next batter. *La Presse's* two remaining pages of coverage are not nearly as developed. Page F4 featured a column and two sidebars, both by *La Presse* reporter Pierre Ladouceur.<sup>49</sup> Page F7 featured a short fan feature—one pro-Rose, one anti-Rose—by *La Presse* reporter Alain De Repentigny.<sup>50</sup>

All in all, Rose's accomplishment was celebrated, but the moment had no legs beyond the day. In fact, it was not mentioned by either newspaper again prior to Rose's departure, and even then, only in passing—an interesting foreshadowing of its place in future Expos lore. Just one day later, Rose's 4,000th hit was already being pushed as a one-off event, especially for the *Gazette*. It lacked the spontaneity of a perfect game or a four-homer day, something you

wouldn't expect walking into the ballpark that day; it also lacked the long-term relationship career records require between player and fan to gain heft.

Media coverage was not limited to Montreal, although the Quebec newspapers gave it far stronger play. From east to west, newspaper reaction was lukewarm. On the East Coast, the April 14, 1968, *Chronicle-Herald* in Halifax gave Rose a standalone photograph on the front page of the newspaper, which keyed from its cutline into a wire services story and photograph on the sports front.<sup>51</sup> The two photographs were taken within a split second of one another—the front page also showing the ball right off the bat, the inside showing Rose's follow through. The near-duplicated photographs were an odd choice for editors, who usually prefer variety, especially given that there would have been plenty of celebration shots from which to choose. This could have had more to do with deadline than indifference, however, as these would have been the first batch of photographs to move across the wire. As such, they were chosen for expediency. But this decision to run basically the same photograph on two pages speaks to the priority given the story. It was important enough for space but not so important as to push deadline to wait for a better shot. The *Toronto Star* played the news only on the sports front as a standalone photograph from United Press International (UPI), which referred to a story inside the sports section.<sup>52</sup> Editors chose a shot of Rose standing on second base tipping his hat to the crowd. It was the page's lone photograph. To the newspaper's credit, however, the *Star* did commit a staff reporter, Neil MacCarl, to the game. "The sideshow is over, but the game goes on. . . . There was never any serious doubts about Peter Edward Rose reaching the 4,000 hit plateau . . . There [sic] investment in him assured him of the opportunity," MacCarl wrote of the hit. "Only from here on, it is different in the sense that he must hit well enough to assure his presence in the lineup on an everyday basis, the only hope he has of surpassing the late Ty Cobb."<sup>53</sup> The *Globe and Mail* also played Rose's hit on the front page using a standalone UPI photograph taken seconds after the ones used by the *Chronicle-Herald*. The photograph keyed to inside the sports section where another photograph, this one a mirror image of the *Chronicle-Herald* inside photograph, and UPI story sat on page s3.<sup>54</sup> *Globe* editors, like their colleagues in Halifax, also went with the first shots across the wire. This was an obvious choice for either a small publication like Halifax or inside pages for a large national paper like Toronto. It was unusual the *Globe* would go with such a mundane shot on its front page. Why not wait for a potentially more iconic celebration shot? Unlike the *Star*, the *Globe* depended on UPI wire reports to cover the game. No staff was sent, always a sign of its unimportance to the organization.<sup>55</sup> The *Calgary Herald* paid little attention to the mark. It ignored Rose completely on its front page.<sup>56</sup>

Readers wouldn't find a mention of Rose until five pages deep in the sports section, where the paper ran a Canadian Press (CP) wire story and AP photograph, again an early shot similar to the *Chronicle-Herald's* front-page image.<sup>57</sup> Vancouver did not cover the story, as the *Sun* was on strike.

In the States, Rose didn't make the cut of the *New York Times'* front page that day and wasn't found until twenty-two pages in, where his hit led off the National League roundup story.<sup>58</sup> Leading off a roundup is as low as a story can go while still being covered in a sports section. However, the hometown boy was celebrated in Cincinnati with a banner across the top of the *Cincinnati Enquirer's* front page, reading, "Rose Smack No. 4,000: Standing Ovation Greets Pete's Milestone."<sup>59</sup> On the sports front, *Enquirer* reporter Lonnie Wheeler covered the game. "The fact that the hit came against the Phillies—on the 21st anniversary of his first hit, and in his first game wearing Montreal's home uniform—capped a storybook week for Rose," Wheeler wrote. "If he had gotten the 4,000th hit during the three-game series in Cincinnati, he would have done it in the city that adores him most. If he had done it Wednesday, he would have done it on the day he married Carol Woliung. And if he had done it today, he would have done it on the day he turned 43."<sup>60</sup> The record came too late in the printing cycle for the *Sporting News*, still billing itself as "The Bible of Baseball," which had the Los Angeles Lakers' Kareem Abul-Jabbar on the cover of its April 16, 1984, edition. And by the next issue, April 23, 1984, featuring Red Sox third baseman Wade Boggs on the cover, Rose's hit was old news. *Sports Illustrated* named Rose its Player of the Week in the magazine's April 23 issue. However, the magazine opted for New York Mets rookie sensation Darryl Strawberry for the cover; Rose's accomplishment was relegated to a paragraph and thumbnail picture on page 59.<sup>61</sup>

Rose's situation echoed a similar event only a decade earlier. On April 8, 1974, Hank Aaron hit career home run No. 715 off Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Al Downing in Atlanta, breaking Ruth's all-time mark. It is among the iconic moments in the last half century of baseball and a trivia question most fans of the game can recite. Nine months earlier, however, Aaron hit his 700th home run, making him only the second player to achieve such a mark at that time. But ask who the pitcher was that day, and you'll get a blank stare from many.<sup>62</sup> As for Rose, the significance of the elite nature of that round number was overshadowed by the proximity of the all-time mark. (Although, Aaron set the record in the same uniform.) Perhaps if Ruth's mark had been another 50 more homers away, instead of just 14, readers might have seen more commemoration. Despite that, Aaron dominated the front pages of the *Atlanta Journal* and the *Atlanta Constitution* on Sunday, July 22, 1973. In an era of far more understated front pages, the Atlanta newspapers sometimes boasted

between seven and ten stories on the front alone—there sat Aaron’s photograph, capturing him watching number 700, beside the headline, “Only 14 to Go: 700 for Hank.” The photograph and staff-written story, both above the fold, were sandwiched between French nuclear tests above and the Watergate investigation of Nixon below.<sup>63</sup> Funny, Aaron’s 700th home run drew attention in Montreal as well. The *Gazette* played an uncredited stand-alone photograph on its sports front, which was used to key to a story inside the section. The AP story, a graphic on Aaron’s milestone homers, and an accompanying UPI photo are stripped across the top of page 37.<sup>64</sup> Although certainly less than what Rose would receive for 4,000, Aaron received quite prominent play for a story taking place over 1,400 miles away from Montreal.

#### WILTING ROSE

Back in Montreal, one day after Rose made history, the reporters returned to commenting on the team; and as Rose’s playing time lessened and lessened and the team’s fortunes continued to sink, so did discussions about Rose. As Rose edged toward Cobb, the Expos continued to slide. It would be another lost season. On August 6, 1984, Rose collected his last hit as an Expo, a single off Carlton and the Phillies. Playing first base that night, Rose was part of a fielding blunder between pitcher Charlie Lea and second baseman Doug Flynn, which opened the door to a three-run eighth inning for the Phillies. The Expos lost 4–1.<sup>65</sup> On August 12, 1984, Rose took his final at bat as an Expo as a pinch hitter. He made an out against the Chicago Cubs in another Expos loss.<sup>66</sup> On August 16, 1984, Rose was traded to the Reds for Tom Lawless.<sup>67</sup> Although he didn’t factor in his final game as an Expo, Rose appeared in a CP photo on the front of the *Gazette* sports section on August 16, 1984. The cutline below the photo, which pictured Rose greeting teammate Tim Wallach after hitting a two-run home run, read, “Pete’s parting pat.” The same photo ran on *La Presse*’s sports front.

It was the end of an eventful, if brief, era. His final career totals as an Expo read 95 games, 34 runs, 72 hits, 6 doubles, 2 triples, 0 home runs, 23 RBI, .259 batting average, .334 on-base percentage, and .295 slugging percentage. But buried in those mediocre numbers was one gem: number 4,000.<sup>68</sup>

The next day, August 17, 1984—and for the last time until he broke Cobb’s record the next year—Rose graced the *Gazette*’s sports front page. Again, it was an AP story and photo.<sup>69</sup> The paper couldn’t resist a final jab—this time not at Rose, but using Rose to deliver it to Expos management. Reaction to the departure was swift and damning—not at the trade per se but at what was perceived at the time, and even to this day, as the entire Rose debacle.

“For if nothing else, the Expos have been wonderful embalmers, taking in the halt and lame and the aged and prettying them up as red herrings to divert the fandom from the deep-rooted malaise that has ravaged the franchise for years,” Burke wrote in a column on the *Gazette’s* sports front. “With Rose, however, they took on something not even their cosmetician skills could handle. The guy got up off the table before he could be painted the villain of the annual tragedy.” In continuing to dismantle the failed experiment, Burke beautifully described Rose as a “43-year-old Ahab in pursuit of Ty Cobb’s ultimate record” and summed up the signing as “prescribing a Bromo-Seltzer to somebody with cancer in their stomach.” Burke saw this day as perhaps the final day of Expos relevance, even though they would be in Montreal another twenty (turbulent) years. He wrote:

When the Expos signed Rose, it was written here—in foresight—that he’d stir some interest at the beginning of the season because he was just a few hits from the 4,000-pantheon. I also predicted that it was fortunate Pope John Paul II was coming to town in September, because the Expos will have been long gone from the pennant race. . . . Not all the smugness and smoothness and arrogance they can summon can divert the public from the stark truth the franchise has become a halfway house to oblivion. Where once the cry across the land was “Enwai, Nos Expos!” now the wave across six time zones swells to “Love them Jays!”<sup>70</sup>

A year later, when Rose set the all-time mark, the *Gazette* put an AP story on its front page. It dominated the sports front that day, September 12, 1985, although the coverage was limited to an AP story and photo as well as a column sidebar from Scripps Howard news service.<sup>71</sup> Unlike the Cincinnati newspaper, which embedded a reporter with Rose in Montreal until he got hit number 4,000, reflecting that city’s interest despite the uniform, the Montreal media had had its fill of Rose and no longer considered him worthy of beat reporter resources.<sup>72</sup> Interest in Rose dried up the day he packed his bags for Cincinnati.

#### NO MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE

Three men have had the final words on the franchise—Jacques Doucet, Marc Robitaille, and Alain Useau. In the near decade since the franchise essentially died, their books—available in both French and English—have defined Expos history.<sup>73</sup> Not simply “fan books,” these are serious reviews of the team’s history both on and off the field. For a franchise that had biographies written on only three of its players—Gary Carter, Rusty Staub, and Rose, although the latter is little more than a flyer—the works produced by this trio are as close to



canonical text as you can find. To several generations of fans, what these men have written—and what they have chosen to write about—has become *the* history. And while the Expos franchise continues to receive a more fulsome (and deserved) review of its history in their works, Rose's role has continued to diminish, even disappear. All three men view Rose as an inconsequential part of the team's history—4,000th hit or no. This belief is reflected in their books and in their current attitude during recent interviews.

Doucet, coauthor of the authoritative Expos history *Il était une fois les Expos*, was the French radio voice of the Expos from 1972 to 2004. His book is an exhaustive history of the franchise, from the early battles to get it up and running in 1968 with no stadium, bailing investors, and an abject lack of cash to the end of the franchise. His publisher was even talked into splitting the tome into two volumes—one covering 1969–84 and a second covering 1984 until the franchise's end in 2004. Doucet's memories are vivid of Rose's days with the club.<sup>74</sup> “The fans loved him. Every eye in the stadium was focused on him. When he got that 4,000th hit, the place went wild. Of course, we were hoping—and when I say ‘we’ I am talking about the fans—eventually he would break the record wearing an Expos uniform,” Doucet said. “But that was not meant to be.”

Robitaille, Doucet's coauthor, echoed those sentiments: “The big deal was not so much 4,000 but 4,191. That was the big deal; the big deal was the record. And of course, that made *Time* magazine and *Sports Illustrated*. There would have been quite a circus around that.”

In 1984, Doucet alternated play-by-play responsibilities with his partner every three innings during games—Doucet usually taking the first and last three innings. For Rose's 4,000th hit, he was working color commentary. “It was a page of history written in Montreal,” he said. “It was about fifteen years after the Expos were born, so we didn't have many opportunities to celebrate events, exploits like that.” Doucet compared Rose's moment only to pitcher Bill Stoneman, who threw both the first (April 17, 1969) and second (October 2, 1972) no-hitters in the franchise's history. But Rose's moment was an excitement, even Doucet admits, that faded as quickly as it arrived.

Robitaille was a bit harsher in his summation.<sup>75</sup> He called Rose's tenure “a huge distraction. They might have thrown away the year because they hired Pete Rose.” Robitaille counts himself among the few who think the Expos should have hired Rose on as player-manager, beating the Reds to the punch.

If you wanted to make an impact, don't hire the player, hire the manager. That's what the Reds did later, right? . . . It could have been very exciting. . . . And maybe Pete gets the record as a Montreal Expo.

[The 4,000th hit is also] sort of a footnote. It's like "Oh yeah, he was an Expo when he hit that." It's more that than a record that stands. If you look at the fifty greatest moments in Expos' history, I don't think it's there. He wasn't there long enough.

Usereau explored the Expos' "glory years" in his book *L'Époque glorieuse des Expos*. In it, he revisited the years 1976–84, with a particular emphasis on 1979–81. Rose's time with the club closed out the book and the "glory years" of the franchise. During his research, Usereau, who interviewed more than one hundred people for his book, explored Rose but did not treat him differently than, say, Bill Virdon, when he was named manager a year prior: "Rose was just a part of it. He was brought in to change the atmosphere in the clubhouse. That was the purpose of his signing. And it never happened. Never happened. From the team and Pete Rose's standpoint, that was a mercenary signing."<sup>76</sup>

All three men admit Rose was a difficult man during his time, a fact reflected on the pages of period newspapers and current books and imprinted on many memories. Perhaps, if he had been a more agreeable man, his memory would not be as tarnished. But if that were so, Doucet said, would he then be the Pete Rose people expected to see when he arrived north of the border. Playing what-ifs with Rose's tenure leads to all sorts of possibilities, Doucet admitted. What if he would have broken Cobb's mark as an Expo? "He would have been an instant idol the way a Gary Carter is or, if you go to hockey, a Frank Mahovlich, who came to Montreal and helped them win a Stanley Cup, is," Doucet continued. "He was not homegrown, but he would have been a part of an accomplishment the Expos never realized."

"[The Expos] probably saved Pete Rose's career," Usereau said. "I don't know what he would have done had the Expos decided not to sign him. Quite honestly. Like his agent told me, there was no market for him. . . . That's a very good question to be asked: what would have happened if the Expos had decided not to give him a contract at the time? I really don't know."

What if he had become the player-manager instead of being traded, as some suggested? Usereau suggested:

After we saw what happened and the trouble he got into as a player-manager with the Reds, when you know the end of the story, I am almost glad he didn't do it in Montreal. It would have been a black mark on the Expos. Their manger banished for life—I don't think it's a thing any ball club would like to have on their résumé. Although he was here for less than one hundred games, I think he left his mark in Montreal. I don't think people forget he got that in an Expos uniform. [But] you have to understand it was less than one hundred games. He came and went. If he had stayed the whole season and led the team to the playoffs, then it would have been said that it was "the year Pete Rose came to the Expos."

Usereau described Rose's legacy in Montreal as "minimal, at best. He didn't really try hard to immerse himself in the Montreal society." He pointed to the fact that most books on Rose, including ones by Rose, barely mention his tenure in Canada.

[Rose's signing] did nothing to help out the team on the field or in the clubhouse, either. If you are talking about leadership, yes, he was there and he worked hard, but he was in his own world. . . .

[Rose's tenure] was a period that was, I would not say it wasn't famous, but if he wouldn't have played, it wouldn't have made any difference. Basically, he was never celebrated in any way. It was a year when the Expos were going through very big changes—from a player's standpoint, from an organization standpoint, and from the way the fans would regard the Expos. It was the year the fans really gave up in their relationship with the team. It was a love affair. I compare them with the Habs. The Habs are more a family affair. They can screw up for ten years, like a teenager doing whatever, but he will always be welcomed back. It was a love affair with the Expos; when it was over, it was over.

## CONCLUSIONS

It's hard to hold journalists and historians accountable for something even their subject refuses to consider important. Perhaps with baseball immortality so close, Rose was like everyone else and simply not waiting on number 4,000. "This is just something on the way to the next 192 hits," he said in the press conference following his historic game.<sup>77</sup> Years later, Rose ignored the feat; in fact, he nearly ignored his entire time in Montreal, in both his autobiographies. In *Pete Rose: My Story*, Rose dedicated one page of three photos in the book's center to his time in Montreal, none of them picturing his 4,000th hit. He mentioned the Expos only once in passing, on page 228, when referring to rumors of diminished bat speed.<sup>78</sup> In *Pete Rose: My Prison without Bars*, Rose did not mention playing for Montreal at all. Although his 3,000th hit got a nod, his 4,000th got none. The Expos only get mentioned on page 98, and that's in reference to getting his 3,000th hit against them.<sup>79</sup>

Rose's 4,000th hit and, in turn, his tenure on the Expos have been virtually erased from franchise history. Even if his lifetime ban should lift and he is allowed into the Baseball Hall of Fame, I suspect memories of his time north of the border would not sharpen. Although he was celebrated—briefly—in the moment, Rose was roundly ridiculed by media, who used him as a representation of all that was wrong with the Expos, perhaps overlooking what was happening in front of them. Those feelings have been carried on through

histories written by various authorities and, despite an almost renewed interest in the team, have sat without reevaluation. But magnified and misguided emotions in the moment do not diminish the importance of that achievement, even if it is caught up in a greater and largely unconnected drama.

Yes, Rose was a victim of his own personality, but he was also a victim of a media disappointed in, what they perceived as, a lackluster team management and, let's not forget, bad timing. But silence does not dismiss significance. If we are to believe baseball communicates in numbers, then 4,000 is worthy of some conversation it is not receiving thirty years later.

#### NOTES

1. Alan Schwarz, "Baseball Is a Game of Numbers, but Whose Numbers Are They?" *New York Times*, May 16, 2006.

2. These are the numbers worn by Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, and Joe Dimaggio, respectively. Stan Musial wore the number 6 for the Cardinals.

3. Devin Pope and Uri Simonsohn, "Round Numbers as Goals: Evidence from Baseball, SAT Takers and the Lab," *Psychology Science* 22, no. 1 (January 2011): 71-79. There was a wonderful study from the Booth School of Business at the University of Chicago that showed, overall, the behavior of baseball players proved consistent with the hypothesis that a round number, such as a batting average of .300, can act as a goal that influences behavior. The researchers' analyses of the baseball data have "two notable limitations: There was only one relevant round number, and players' actions to improve performance took place on the last plate appearances of the seasons and hence had relatively minor consequences."

4. Nicholas Parsons and Michael Stern, "There's No Dying in Baseball: Cultural Valorization, Collective Memory and Induction into the Baseball Hall of Fame," *Sociology and Sport* 29 (2012): 62-88.

5. Danny Gallagher and Bill Young, *Remembering the Montreal Expos* (Toronto ON: Scoop Press, 2005). Gallagher and Young dedicate only eighty-six words in their book to Rose.

6. Bill Young, "Talking Expos: Talking Books in Two Languages," *Seamheads.com*, May 10, 2010, <http://seamheads.com/2010/05/12/talking-expos-talking-books-%E2%80%93-in-two-languages/>.

7. Baseball-Reference.com, "Washington Nationals Team History and Encyclopedia," *Baseball-Reference.com*, 2012, <http://www.baseball-reference.com/teams/wsn/>.

8. Brian Kappler, "Rose Shrugs off His Milestone Hit," *Montreal Gazette*, April 14, 1984, H3.

9. Brian Kappler, "48,000 Cheer the Expos' New Star," *Montreal Gazette*, April 14, 1984, A1.

10. Michael Farber, "Muted Response to Rose's Feat," *Montreal Gazette*, April 14, 1984, H1.

11. Ian MacDonald, "Rose Gets 4,000th Hit as Expos Win Opener," *Montreal Gazette*, April 14, 1984, H1.

12. Baseball-Reference.com, "Pete Rose Statistics and History," *Baseball-Reference.com*, <http://www.baseball-reference.com/players/r/rosepe01.shtml>.

13. Researching Rose sets off all sorts of irony alarms, as we have the advantage of hindsight to inform the dark humor of the instance. The cover story for this issue, "Confessions of a Master Fixer," by Bill Surface, focuses the mastermind of a horserace fixing and betting scheme.

14. E. M. Swift, "Rose Might Not Be Red Anymore," *Sports Illustrated*, November 6, 1978, 34–42.

15. Baseball-Reference.com, "Pete Rose Statistics and History."

16. Swift, "Rose Might Not Be Red Anymore."

17. Without adjusting for inflation, that \$800,000 per year salary would put Rose \$28.2 million per year behind the highest paid player in the game in 2012. In fact, Rose's salary was not even twice today's major-league minimum of \$480,000. You know, if teacher salaries had risen at the same rate as baseball players in that same time period, the average teacher would be making \$563,700 annually. But they probably cannot hit a curveball.

18. Baseball-Reference.com, "Pete Rose Statistics and History."

19. Ian MacDonald, "42-Year-Old Rose Ready to Crash into Fences for Expos," *Montreal Gazette*, January 21, 1984, H1; William A. Cook, *Pete Rose: Baseball's All-Time Hit King* (Jefferson NC: McFarland, 2004).

20. Larry Stone, "The Mariners' 10 Worst Free-Agent Signings," *Seattle Times*, June 17, 2007.

21. The Yomiuri Giants were also the home team for Sadaharu Oh, considered the greatest home run hitter in Japanese baseball history. He hit 868 home runs in twenty-two seasons with the club. Cook, *Pete Rose*.

22. Christmas was an unofficial sign date for top-line free agents at the time, far different than today, when free agents—or, more precisely, agents for free agents—will hold off till closer to spring training for the biggest deal. Arguably the top free agent going into the 2012 season, Prince Fielder, would not sign with the Detroit Tigers until January 26, 2012, with little stigma attached to signing only five weeks before spring training's start on March 2, 2012. Baseball-Reference.com, "1983 Major League Baseball Transactions," *Baseball-Reference.com*, <http://www.baseball-reference.com/leagues/mlb/1983-transactions.shtml>.

23. Ian MacDonald, "Expos Would 'Awesome' with Me: Rose," *Montreal Gazette*, January 18, 1984, C5.

24. Tim Burke, "Rose's Signing a Smoke-Screen," *Montreal Gazette*, January 20, 1984.

25. Michael Farber, "Signing 42-Year-Old Rose Puts Expos out in Left Field." *Montreal Gazette*, January 21, 1984, H2.

26. Michel Blanchard, "Rose, une espece de Rocket," *La Presse*, January 21, 1984.

27. Michel Blanchard, "Aux Conditions des Expos!" *La Presse*, January 20, 1984.

28. Blanc Blanchard, "On vend des billets ou on joue au baseball," *La Presse*, January 17, 1984.

29. Blanchard, "Aux Conditions des Expos!"

30. Cook, *Pete Rose*.

31. "Rose 9th Expo to Wear 14," *Montreal Gazette*, April 13, 1984. F6. Elroy Face, Marv Staehle, Ron Swoboda, Larry Doby, Duke Snider, Sam Mejias, Tommy Hutton, and Steve Boros, all preceded Rose with the number 14.

32. David Jordan, *Pete Rose: A Biography* (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 2004).

33. Ian MacDonald, "Rose, Dilone Supply Expos' Punch," *Montreal Gazette*, April 4, 1984, F1.

34. You could say Rose walked five times that day—four on the field and once to the altar that morning, as *Montreal Gazette* reporter Ian MacDonald so cleverly put it. That morning, Rose married girlfriend Carol Woliung, a former hostess at the downtown Cincinnati nightclub Sleep-Out-Louie's, located on Second Street, which would become named Pete Rose Way years later. Woliung was a former high school baton twirler and NFL cheerleader. "I heard she had the prettiest bottom in Ohio," Rose told author Roger Kahn. "Some scouting reports you check out personally."

"8:30 a.m. Rose is married at the Cincinnati home of his attorney, Reuven Katz," wrote *Montreal Gazette* columnist Michael Farber the next day, "proving that four days shy of his 43rd birthday, he can still get up for a day game after a night game."

35. Poor choice of words in retrospect. Ian MacDonald, "Walks Stall Rose's 4,000-Hit Bid," *Montreal Gazette*, April 12, 1984, F1.

36. Michael Farber, "Rose Says 'I Do' but Then Doesn't," *Montreal Gazette*, April 12, 1984, F3.

37. Shirley Povich, "Best Player—Not Best Man," *Washington Post*, January 1, 1995, D14.

38. Ty Cobb's son was quite bitter (despite his protests to the contrary) about Rose closing in on his dad's record. James Cobb, a retired engineer living in Santa Maria, California, told *People Weekly* in its September 2, 1985, issue, "I'm not bitter, it's not sour grapes, but I believe in telling it like it is: If you don't stay within the boundaries, it shouldn't count. My father played a 154-game schedule. Pete Rose plays a 162-game schedule. It took my father 11,429 at-bats to amass his 4,191 hits. It's taken Rose more than 13,700. Sure I'm sorry Rose is breaking my father's record. Why wouldn't I be?" For the record, James did not comment on that magazine's cover story, "Madonna Lands Her Lucky Star," about the pop singer's wedding to actor Sean Penn.

39. Stewart Wolpin, "Ty Cobb," *BaseballLibrary.com*, [http://www.baseballlibrary.com/ballplayers/player.php?name=ty\\_cobb\\_1886](http://www.baseballlibrary.com/ballplayers/player.php?name=ty_cobb_1886).
40. Jerry Koosman, whose 1968 Topps baseball card is worth more than \$1,000 in top condition because he shares it with Nolan Ryan, was also jailed on tax-related charges. Just like Rose. So this was a big moment in both baseball and IRS history.
41. Al Stump, *Cobb: A Biography* (Chapel Hill NC: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 1994).
42. "Gold," *Montreal Gazette*, April 17, 1984.
43. Andrew Cohen, "Remembering Hockey's 'Good Friday Massacre,' 28 Years Later." *Atlantic Monthly*, April 20, 2012.
44. Remember, in the days before the Internet, the next day was the first day you could read a game story.
45. MacDonald, "42-Year-Old Rose Ready to Crash into Fences for Expos."
46. For instance, the article mentions actor, Order of Canada winner, and "incurable Expos fan" Donald Sutherland was in attendance.
47. Brian Kappler, "Rose Shrugs off His Milestone Hit," *Montreal Gazette*, April 14, 1984, H3.
48. Farber, "Muted Response to Rose's Feat."
49. Pierre Ladouceur, "La marque de Rose se compare a celle de Aaron et de DiMaggio," *La Presse*, April 14, 1984.
50. Alain De Repentigny, "Ovationne plus que Rose Boucher rate son lancer," *La Presse*, April 14, 1984, F7.
51. "Rose Joins Cobb in 4,000 Club." *Chronicle-Herald*, April 14, 1984, 26.
52. "Major Milestone," *Toronto Star*, April 14, 1984, C1.
53. Neil MacCarl, "One More Mountain Left for Pete Rose to Climb," *Toronto Star*, April 14, 1984, C2.
54. "Another Milestone," *Globe and Mail*, April 14, 1984, A1.
55. United Press International, "Rose Collects No. 4,000 as Expos Dump Phillies," *Globe and Mail*, April 14, 1984, S3.
56. *Calgary Herald*, April 14, 1984, 1.
57. Canadian Press, "Rose Collects 4,000th Hit in Home Opener," *Calgary Herald*, April 14, 1984, 5.
58. *New York Times*, April 14, 1984, 1. United Press International, "Rose Gets Double for His 4,000th Hit," *New York Times*, April 14, 1984, 22.
59. Lonnie Wheeler, "21 Years after His First Hit, Rose Gets 4,000th," *Cincinnati Enquirer*, April 14, 1984, C1.
60. Wheeler, "21 Years after His First Hit, Rose Gets 4,000th."
61. "Player of the Week," *Sports Illustrated*, April 23, 1984. His return home as player-manager in Cincinnati, finally, garnered Rose the cover of *Sports Illustrated* on August 27, 1984.

62. He hit number 700 off Philadelphia Phillies pitcher Ken Brett, perhaps best known as being the brother of All-Star third baseman George Brett.

63. *Atlanta Journal and Atlanta Constitution*, July 22, 1973, 1.

64. Associated Press, "Aaron's 700th Homer: 'It's Like the Sun Coming Up,'" *Montreal Gazette*, July 23, 1973, 37.

65. Ian MacDonald, "Expos Drop Five below .500 with Loss to Phillies' Carlton," *Montreal Gazette*, August 7, 1984, F1.

66. Baseball-Reference.com, "Pete Rose Statistics and History."

67. Baseball-Reference.com, "1983 Major League Baseball Transactions."

68. Baseball-Reference.com, "Pete Rose Statistics and History."

69. Associated Press, "New Job Will Hurt Record Chase: Rose," *Montreal Gazette*, August 17, 1984, C1.

70. Tim Burke, "Expos Con-men Failed with Rose," *Montreal Gazette*, August 16, 1984, C1.

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72. Wheeler, "21 Years after His First Hit, Rose Gets 4,000th."

73. Starting in 2005, when the Expos moved to Washington DC, Major League Baseball recognizes Washington Nationals statistics as a continuation of the Montreal Expos franchise. That means, for instance, the Washington Nationals' all-time home run leaders are Vlad Guerrero, Andre Dawson, and Gary Carter, none of whom played for the Nationals.

74. Jacques Doucet, interview with the author, November 6, 2012.

75. Marc Robitaille, interview with the author, October 19, 2012.

76. Alain Usereau, interview with the author, October 15, 2012.

77. Wheeler, "21 Years after His First Hit, Rose Gets 4,000th."

78. Pete Rose and Roger Kahn, *Pete Rose: My Story* (New York: MacMillan, 1989).

79. Pete Rose and Rick Hill, *Pete Rose: My Prison without Bars* (Emmaus PA: Rodale, 2004).