



# **PELICAN BRIEFS**

by

**S. Derby Gisclair**

## **Fans Riot at Pelicans Game**

August 28, 1927

Fans packed Heinemann Park to the gills on a bright, sunny Sunday afternoon to see their Pelicans take on the Birmingham Barons. A double-header had been scheduled – the regularly scheduled game and a make-up game from July 17<sup>th</sup>. Paid attendance was reported to be 15,411 for a facility that comfortably held 10,000 and established a new attendance record for both New Orleans and the Southern Association.

However, there were approximately 3,000 late-comers who were denied admission. Undeterred, the majority of these fans found their way to the centerfield fence and, to no one's surprise, gained access to the ball park. Once inside they milled about with the other fans on the edge of the third base line and into left field. The sheer mass of humanity on the field caused a number of delays in the game.

The boisterous New Orleans fans utilized horns and cowbells to express their support. Several New Orleans firemen operated three large sirens stationed next to the Birmingham dugout that no doubt caused the Birmingham players and the few Birmingham fans on hand to cover their ears.

They might also have covered their eyes as their team had little to offer that afternoon.

The Pelicans were leading 12 – 10 going into the bottom of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning. Barons' pitcher Hollis McLaughlin was the fourth Birmingham hurler of the game and was faring no better than his predecessors. With little else on the ball but its stiches, McLaughlin gave up two walks and five hits. With three runs already in, Pelicans' pitcher "Oyster Joe" Martina laid down a sacrifice bunt, after which Barons' second baseman Max Rosenfeld claimed that Martina had intentionally spiked him at first base. There was a heated exchange between Rosenfeld, McLaughlin and Martina, the result of which was that McLaughlin was in an extremely foul mood when he returned to the mound to face Pelican shortstop Ray Gardner.

McLaughlin's first pitch was up-and-in, barely missing Gardner's head and causing him to hit the dirt. Another heated exchange ensued with retaliation promised. McLaughlin was so worked up that he uncorked another fastball aimed at Gardner's head which Gardner ducked, allowing the Pelican base runner on third to score on the wild pitch. Gardner rushed the mound bat in hand with the obvious intent of doing serious bodily harm to McLaughlin.

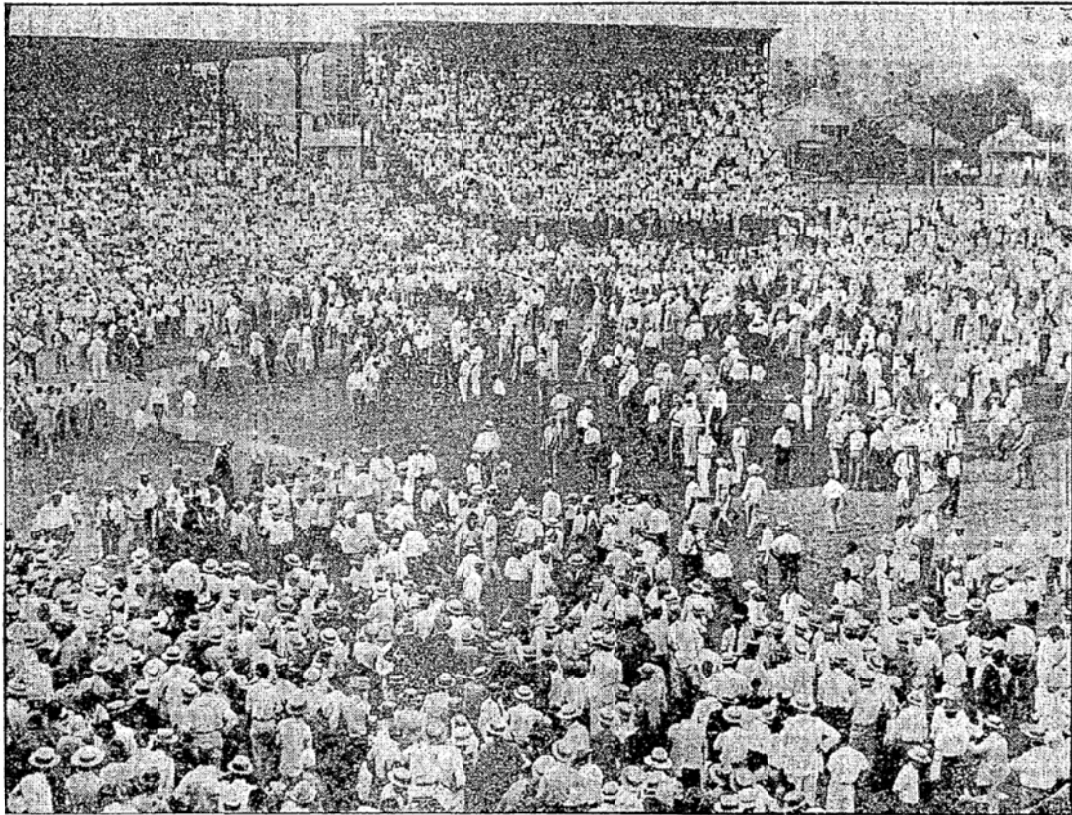
It was at that moment that New Orleans Police Captain Joe Sonnenberg alertly interposed himself between the two, absorbing Gardner's blow and pushing away McLaughlin. For some reason Rosenfeld interpreted Sonnenberg's actions as hostile toward McLaughlin and took a swing at the police officer.

The overflow crowd on the field now took to the diamond and one of these fans, Emil Soudain, engaged Rosenfeld in a fist-fight. Police arrested Soudain and Rosenfeld while McLaughlin and Gardner were ejected for fighting. There was little or no actual fighting other than those already mentioned, just a great swell of fans milling about the field and with great difficulty order was eventually restored. However, Birmingham manager Johnny Dobbs refused to play unless Rosenfeld, who by this time had already been transported to jail, was returned. After an hour of discussion, argument and negotiation, Dobbs relented and changed his lineup.

**S. Derby Gisclair**

404 Notre Dame Street – PH1, New Orleans LA 70130

## When the Barriers Broke Loose in “Lucky Seventh”



The Barons sent pitcher Jake Kloza to the mound and the hit parade continued with a double by Bob Murray, who replaced Gardner. The inning ended some 90 minutes after it had started, with the Pelicans pelting a total of ten hits and plating 13 runs in the frame. The final tally was New Orleans 25 – Birmingham 16. Needless to say, the makeup game could not be played.

Lost in the attention paid to the melee was a new league record for most doubles in a single game with 18 – 9 by Birmingham and 9 by New Orleans.



*Pelicans' shortstop Ray Gardner (center with bat) is restrained by New Orleans policemen after he rushed Birmingham pitcher Hollis McLaughlin in the 7<sup>th</sup> inning for throwing at his head.*

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Box score for the game between the Birmingham Barons and the New Orleans Pelicans on Sunday, August 28, 1927 at Heinemann Park.

**BIRMINGHAM**

	AB	R	H	PO	A	E
Ballenger, 3b .....	6	1	1	3	3	1
Gillis, ss .....	4	1	1	1	5	0
Ganzel, lf .....	6	3	3	2	0	0
Bigelow, rf .....	5	2	3	1	0	0
Yaryan, c .....	4	3	3	1	1	0
Hubert, c .....	1	0	0	0	0	0
Rosenfeld, 2b .....	4	0	2	2	3	1
Schepner, 2b .....	1	0	0	0	1	0
Barnes, cf .....	5	2	2	4	0	0
Jourdan, 1b .....	5	2	2	10	1	0
Brett, p .....	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newton, p .....	0	0	0	0	1	0
Coffman, p .....	3	1	2	0	0	0
McLaughlin, p .....	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kloza, p .....	2	1	1	0	0	0
Totals .....	46	16	20	24	13	2

**NEW ORLEANS**

	AB	R	H	PO	A	E
Gardner, ss .....	4	3	2	2	4	0
Murray, ss .....	2	1	1	1	0	0
Blakesley, lf .....	5	4	4	2	0	1
Morgan, rf .....	5	4	4	1	0	1
Davis, 1b .....	3	5	2	11	0	0
Whitney, 3b .....	6	3	4	2	1	0
Vick, cf .....	6	1	5	2	0	0
Anderson, c .....	5	1	2	3	0	0
Ewoldt, 2b .....	6	1	1	0	6	0
Atkins, p .....	4	2	2	0	0	1
Martina, p .....	1	0	0	0	0	0
Totals .....	47	25	27	27	11	3

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Score by innings:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Birmingham .....	0	1	0	0	2	2	5	3	3	-- 16
New Orleans .....	3	1	0	4	0	4	13	0	X	-- 25

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Summary: Two-base hits, Atkins, Morgan 2, Whitney 3, Vick 3, Ganzel 2, Bigelow 2, Yaryan 3, Murray, Ballenger. Sacrifices, Morgan, Gillis, Martina. Double plays, Rosenfeld to Gillis to Jourdan 2. Left on bases, Birmingham 5, New Orleans 8. Base on balls, off Brett 1, off Coffman 3, off McLaughlin 2, off Martina 1, off Kloza 2. Struck out, by Atkins 1, by Coffman 1. Hits, off Brett in 1/3 inning 3, 3 runs; off McLaughlin in 1/3 inning 5, 8 runs; off Newton in 2/3 inning, 2, 1 run; off Atkins in 6-2/3 innings, 12, 10 runs; off Coffman in 5 innings, 12, 8 runs. Wild pitches, McLaughlin, Kloza. Passed balls, Yaryan. Winning pitcher, Atkins; losing pitcher, Brett. Time of game – 2 hours and 10 minutes. Umpires – Brennan, Shannon, and Johnson.