

Place Your Bets: The Events Surrounding the 1919 World Series

“The game of baseball is a clean, straight game.” William Howard Taft

They said it could never be done. They said it was impossible. It was America’s pastime. Something like this should not and could not be tampered with. Something in the public eye as much as the World Series could not be fixed. No one ever tried it, so how did they know? In 1919 it was tried. In a World Series against the Cincinnati Reds, eight Chicago White Sox players decided to throw the World Series. These players included: Joe Jackson, Eddie Cicotte, Chick Gandil, Oscar Felsch, Fred McMullin, Swede Risberg, Buck Weaver, and Claude Williams. The country saw one of the greatest teams in sports history fall prey to a mediocre team. Like any other World Series, rumors of a fix were floating around. Unlike the other times, this fix was real. It was backed up by a big bankroll. They made themselves look like Little Leaguers up against a professional team. The best players in baseball played so poorly in that series that people couldn’t help but wonder if it was true. There are three aspects to one of the biggest scandals in baseball history and recent memory: the games, the fix, and the ensuing trial.

The Games

The first game of the World Series took place on October 1, 1919 in Cincinnati. The starting pitcher of the day was Eddie Cicotte. Cicotte was the winner of twenty-nine games and had only seven losses that year. He was the White Sox’s ace pitcher. He was thirty-five and nearing the end of his career. Some reporters described him as a “baseball player in the twilight years.”¹ Cicotte was very likable. He was the prankster on the team. He had a powerful fastball and a brilliant curve. He had been playing ball for over twenty years. Warming up on October 1st, he was pitching some of his best pitches ever. The only thing that troubled him

¹ Asinof, Eliot. *Eight Men Out: The Black Sox and the 1919 World Series* (New York: Holt, 1963) 59.

was the fact he would not be able to throw those good pitches during the game. Cicotte agreed to throw the World Series for ten thousand dollars, an amount that was more than twice his salary that year.

The game was about to start, and in the press booth above the field sat newspaperman Hugh Fullerton. Fullerton was covering the Series and was in tune with the rumors of a possible fix surrounding the Series. In fact, Fullerton took it upon himself to invite a former ballplayer, Christy Mathewson, to sit in the booth with him. His intention was to watch each play carefully to see if the play was made or lost on purpose. He knew that ballplayers could make the easiest plays look hard, and that is why Mathewson accompanied him. If a play was questionable, he would circle it and get Mathewson's opinion. He had no idea that he would be drawing so many circles on his scorecard that day. Cicotte threw his first pitch. It was a high strike. It wasn't what Ray Schalk, the catcher, had signaled for. The World Series and the biggest scandal in baseball history were underway.

Cicotte threw some of his worst pitches that day, setting the tone for the rest of the series. Cicotte gave up four runs this game. White Sox manager, William Gleason, remarked that a bunch of .250 hitters were teeing off on his ace.² He didn't lose it alone though. Errors by the seven other players involved in the scandal helped make it look as if Cincinnati was the best team ever. They made the losing seem real, but to the trained eye, you knew something was going on. The rest of the Series followed the same pattern. Dropped balls, errors, and bad pitching were common for the Chicago defense. Strikeouts fly outs, and groundouts plagued the offense. In the eighth and final game against Cincinnati, Williams only threw fifteen pitches. He allowed three runs before being taken out of the game. He only had one out. It was later found out that the evening before the eighth game, Williams was visited by a strange man. The man told him that he would lose the eighth game. If he didn't, then something would happen to him, and perhaps his wife as well.³

² Asinof, Eliot. *Eight Men Out: The Black Sox and the 1919 World Series* (New York: Holt, 1963) 67.

³ Asinof, Eliot. *Eight Men Out: The Black Sox and the 1919 World Series* (New York: Holt, 1963) 117.

The games were some of the most disappointing in Chicago history. Rumors of a possible fix flowed like water. It was up to Charles Comiskey, the owner of the Chicago White Sox, to investigate the matters. The question posed to him was whether or not he should pursue the investigation. On one hand, he would be investigating his own team. What would it look like to the fans to see their team investigated? Wouldn't Comiskey look like a fool for not realizing that something was going on sooner? On the other hand, Comiskey couldn't look the other way and not investigate. If he didn't investigate, would his team throw more games in the future? It was a double-edged sword for the baseball mogul. He knew his reputation as being ruthless, and not paying his players as much as other players in the league, but he was a businessman, and his business was to make sure that he made money. The questions he had to ask himself were which players were involved, who would be able to finance something of this magnitude, and how was something like the World Series fixed?

The Fix

Chick Gandil was born January 19, 1887 in St. Paul, Minnesota. He played ball when he was young, and when he was seventeen he dropped out of high school to play catcher for a semi-pro baseball league in Texas. During his baseball career, Gandil played for six different teams, Shreveport, Sacramento, Montreal, Washington, Cleveland and Chicago. In 1910 Gandil was purchased by the Chicago White Sox and made his major league debut on April 14th.⁴ Gandil spent the next several years playing minor league ball after a lackluster first year in the Major Leagues. In 1917 he was reacquired by the White Sox. The White Sox went to the World Series that year. It was later found out that Gandil had reportedly approached a Detroit Tigers pitcher before playing the Tigers in two double-headers. Gandil's reason for the meeting was that he wanted the Tigers to lose all four games and take it easy on the Sox. Each of the Tigers' players agreed, and lost the games for one thousand dollars apiece. The incident was later examined, but no convincing evidence was found. This would not be the last time that fixing a game would come across Gandil's mind.

⁴ "Chick Gandil," [1919blacksox.com](http://www.1919blacksox.com), 12 November 2003 <<http://www.1919blacksox.com>>.

Exactly three weeks before the World Series started, Gandil met with Joseph “Sport” Sullivan. Sullivan was a bookmaker and gambler. Gandil met with Sullivan in Boston’s Hotel Buckminster. Gandil had known Sullivan for quite a while. While playing in Boston Gandil would relieve stress by playing pool in a local pool hall. Sullivan recognized Gandil as a player and quickly became friends with him. Gandil would tell Sullivan about the other players in league. He would mention who was doing well, who would be getting the starts, and who was hurting. This helped Sullivan in his gambling. A strong friendship was formed.

Gandil led Sullivan up to his room and they started talking about baseball. In less than three minutes, Gandil had started to make his proposition. Gandil was saying, “I think we can put it in the bag!”⁵ Gandil guaranteed Sullivan a sufficient number of players would be willing to participate and help throw the series if Sullivan was to pay them eighty thousand dollars. Sullivan told Gandil that he would think it over. It was tempting because of the great deal of money that could be made in something like this. On the other hand, Sullivan knew it would be extremely difficult to pull off, and besides, baseball was an American tradition. Should it be tampered with? Gandil thought so.

A lot of people wonder why a man who devoted his entire life to baseball would want to disgrace it in such a way. To Gandil, it was about money: something that he thought Comiskey paid him too little of. Gandil knew that in order for the scam to work he would have to line up some of the best players, including a few pitchers, to help ensure it could be done. He knew he wasn’t the only one complaining of the low salary. In fact, most of the team was making half of what less-talented ballplayers were. In 1918, the White Sox almost went on strike because the club owners agreed to cut players’ salaries. One of the most upset ballplayers was Eddie Cicotte, the star pitcher. The more Gandil thought about it, the more he knew Cicotte would be the man for the job.

⁵ Asinof, Eliot. *Eight Men Out: The Black Sox and the 1919 World Series* (New York: Holt, 1963) 8.

Cicotte was thirty-five years old. For pitchers, this is almost ancient. Regardless of his age, Cicotte was still a great pitcher. He helped lead the team to winning the World Series in 1917 and had won an amazing twenty-eight games. In 1919, he was on his way to winning twenty-nine, yet Comiskey refused to pay him more than six thousand dollars a year. This was a very low figure considering the amount of games he had won and his experience in the league. He knew he was old, and that Comiskey would dump him after a poor season. If he was going to get what he deserved, he would have to get it now.

When first approached by Gandil about fixing the series Cicotte didn't want any part of it. He had no problem with his teammates doing it; he just didn't want to be a part. Gandil continued to pressure him. He knew that Cicotte took great pride in the way he presented himself and his family. He wanted his family to have the type of life that a family of a professional baseball player is supposed to have. Cicotte finally agreed. One night on a Pullman heading for Boston, Cicotte sat down next to Gandil and mumbled, "I'll do it for ten thousand dollars. Cash. Before the Series begins!"⁶ Now that he had Cicotte, Gandil was sure the other players would be easy to get.

The second player on his list was Swede Risberg. Gandil knew it would be easy to get Risberg because Risberg had mentioned previously the possibility of fixing the Series. In fact, he had discussed so often that friend and teammate Fred McMullin overheard a conversation. Gandil knew that there would be no way they would be able to exclude him. So now Gandil had three players in the scheme. Gandil knew that if this thing was to work he would have to have another pitcher in on the fix. His mind immediately went to Claude Williams.

One day in New York after a ball game, Gandil approached Williams. Williams was reluctant at first. He said he wanted to think it over. When Gandil told him that they were going to go through with it no matter what, Williams started to sway his decision. The final selling point was when Gandil told Williams that Cicotte

⁶ Asinof, Eliot. *Eight Men Out: The Black Sox and the 1919 World Series* (New York: Holt, 1963) 17.

was already in on it. He knew he had Williams right then. Now that he had Williams, Gandil needed to get some of the Sox's big hitters. He was determined to get George Weaver, Joe Jackson, and Oscar Felsch. The next night, he was able to meet with them all. The outcome would be eight men who would do the worst thing you could do in baseball: throw a game.

On September 21, the eight players met with Gandil in his hotel room to discuss the Series. He told the players of his meeting with Sullivan and how he demanded \$80,000 to be delivered before the first game of the World Series. The participating ballplayers would be paid before the start of the opening game. The details of which games were to be thrown were to be decided by the Sullivan and other gamblers that would finance the operation. None of the players had actually taken Sullivan seriously. They didn't believe they could raise that type of money, and the players even joked about throwing the Series light-heartedly. It wasn't until Gandil ran into two other gamblers that things became serious. These two gamblers were William Burns and Billy Maharg.

William Burns and Billy Maharg met with Gandil about the World Series near the end of the season. The first thing that Burns asked was, "was it true? Was there a plan to fix the Series?"⁷ Gandil of course never said answered to the accusations, but instead said that those rumors were always floating around. Gandil later told Burns that they would throw the Series for \$100,000. Neither of the two gamblers would be able to raise that kind of money, so they took the proposition to "one of the biggest professional gamblers of the time, Arnold Rothstein."⁸

On September 23, Burns and Maharg approached Rothstein at a horse race track. The two men were told to wait in the restaurant until Rothstein was able to see them. Rothstein had no intention of seeing the two and sent his right hand man and bodyguard Abe Attell to meet with the two. Burns and Maharg told Attell the

⁷ Asinof, Eliot. *Eight Men Out: The Black Sox and the 1919 World Series* (New York: Holt, 1963) 23.

⁸ 'The Black Sox Scandal of 1919,' Eastland Memorial Society, 15 November 2003 <<http://www.inficad.com/~ksup/landis0.html>>.

plan to throw the World Series. Later that night Attell met back up with Rothstein and told him the plan. Rothstein was skeptical and didn't think it could work. Attell told Burns that Rothstein wasn't interested. Burns wasn't about to give up though. Late that night in the lobby of Rothstein's hotel, Burns and Maharg approached him and insisted that the plan to throw the Series would work. Rothstein told the two men, "whatever my opinion is worth," to forget it.⁹

Abe Attell decided to take it upon himself to make some money. He had watched Rothstein handle business for years and was sure he could do as well as him. He decided to contact Burns and tell him that Rothstein had changed his mind. He told them that Rothstein had agreed to put up the \$100,000 needed to fund the fix. Burns immediately contacted Cicotte and Maharg to tell them that the fix was on. Little did they know that Sport Sullivan had contacted Rothstein about his deal with the Sox players.

Sullivan contacted Rothstein when he could not find anyone to pay up enough money for the fix. Sullivan told Rothstein his plan for the fix and Rothstein expressed some interest. He knew Sullivan better than he knew Burns and Maharg. He also respected him. Rothstein sent an associate of his, Nat Evans, to Chicago with Sullivan to meet the players.

The day before the Series was to begin Sullivan and Evans met with the players in Cincinnati. Evans was told by the players that they wanted \$80,000 to throw the Series. Evans took this news back to Rothstein. Rothstein wasn't going to give them the full \$80,000 up front. He gave Evans \$40,000 to take back to the players. The other \$40,000 was to be placed in a safe in Chicago and would be played to the players if the Series went as planned. Rothstein was prepared to invest a lot in this Series. If all went as planned, he would make a lot of money. He started placing large sums of money on the Reds to win the Series. Evans returned to Chicago and gave Sullivan the \$40,000 for the players. Sullivan had other ideas for the money.

⁹ Linder, Douglas, "The Black Sox Trial: An Account," An Account of the 1919 Chicago Black Sox Scandal and 1921 Trial, University of Missouri, Kansas City, 15 November 2003
<<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/blacksox/blacksoxaccount.html>>

Once Sullivan got the forty \$1,000 bills, he decided to bet \$30,000 of it on the Reds instead of giving it to the players as was agreed upon. He figured he could pay them later. He needed to get the bets down now because the odds were dropping quickly. Chicago was heavily in favor of winning, but the odds were becoming almost even. By the time Sullivan was able to put money down on the Sox, the odds were even. Sullivan placed his bet and gave the other \$10,000 to Cicotte, the starting pitcher for game one of the Series. Upset at not getting any money from Sullivan, seven of the players met with Abe Attell. Only one of the players, Joe Jackson, was not present at this meeting. The topic of the meeting was the payment of their money before the Series started. Attell refused to pay the players before the games and told them that he would pay them \$20,000 for each loss in the Series. The players were of course upset, but agreed anyways. They would be paid later, after the gamblers had made some money off of the first couple games. They decided to throw the first two games of the Series. The Series was about to begin.

The Trial

With the White Sox playing so poorly in the World Series and the talks of a fix, an investigation was sure to begin. Comiskey tried to suppress the rumors by saying, "I believe my boys fought the battle of the recent World Series on the level, as they have always done."¹⁰ Even though Comiskey said this, he didn't actually believe it. He hired a private detective to investigate the finances of the eight players. It was in the winter of 1919 when the story broke in newspapers.

On December 15, 1919, an article appeared in the *New York World*. The headline read "Is Big League Baseball Being Run for Gamblers, With Ballplayers in the Deal?" The author of this article was none other than Hugh Fullerton, the young reporter who covered the World Series just a few months earlier. After circling the bad plays that Series, he demanded that baseball take a look at what was going on. He wanted a full

¹⁰ Linder, Douglas, "The Black Sox Trial: An Account," [An Account of the 1919 Chicago Black Sox Scandal and 1921 Trial](http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/blacksox/blacksoxaccount.html), University of Missouri, Kansas City, 15 November 2003
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investigation and recommended Federal Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis to be placed as head of the investigatory committee. The exposure of the Series' fix didn't come out until later.

In August of 1920, reports of a fix involving a Cubs versus Phillies game came into light. This led to an investigation by the Grand Jury of Cook County. With the ensuing investigation, the Assistant State Attorney Hartley Replogle sent out subpoenas to dozens of baseball players. One of the players that received the subpoena was Rube Benton, a pitcher for the New York Giants. According to Benton, he saw a telegram going to one of the other Giants' players from William Burns. The subject of the telegram was about placing bets on the Reds because Chicago was going to lose purposely. A couple days after Benton's testimony, the Philadelphia *North American* ran an interview with Billy Maharg. This was the first time the details of the fix were provided to the public. With the walls crumbling down around Cicotte, he decided to come forward and give his testimony. He stated, "I don't know why I did it. I must have been crazy."¹¹ Within a few hours, the rest of the White Sox knew that Cicotte had talked. The next one to talk would be Joe Jackson. Later that day in his office, Charles Comiskey sent out a telegram to the eight players and then the press. The telegram read, "You and each of you are hereby notified of your indefinite suspension as a member of the Chicago American League Baseball Club."¹²

Later in Chicago, two more players made their participation be known. Claude Williams was the third Sox player to testify. Oscar Felsch was the fourth person to let his version of the events be heard. His interview was published in the *Chicago American*. He said, "Well, the beans are spilled and I think I'm through with baseball."¹³ At the same time, Rothstein and his attorney, William Fallon, thought it would be a good idea to send Attell and Sullivan out of the country. They wrote it off as vacation with pay. They didn't want Attell or

¹¹ Asinof, Eliot. *Eight Men Out: The Black Sox and the 1919 World Series* (New York: Holt, 1963) 171.

¹² "Eight White Sox Players are Indicted on the Charge of Fixing the 1919 World Series; Cicotte got \$10,000 and Jackson \$5,000." *The New York Times* September 29, 1920: pg 1 column 5.

¹³ Linder, Douglas, "The Black Sox Trial: An Account," [An Account of the 1919 Chicago Black Sox Scandal and 1921 Trial](http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/blacksox/blacksoxaccount.html), University of Missouri, Kansas City, 15 November 2003 <<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/blacksox/blacksoxaccount.html>>

Sullivan to testify. Fallon then had Rothstein go to Chicago to clear his name. Rothstein went and told the Grand Jury that Attell and other gamblers had used his name to make money off the Series. He said he was asked to participate, but instead he turned down the offer. Fallon's plan to clear Rothstein worked. Assistant State Attorney Maclay Hoyne believed that Rothstein was not involved in the fix.

On October 22, 1920, the Grand Jury named the eight Chicago players and gamblers Bill Burns, Joseph Sullivan, and Abe Attell as contributors to the fix. The indictments handed down by the Grand Jury included nine counts of conspiracy to defraud various individuals and institutions. Fallon managed to get the best lawyers in Chicago to represent the players. How this was paid for, no one knows. On February 14, 1921 the ballplayers were arraigned. It was this day that State Attorney George Gorman announced that the players' previous testimonies had been stolen.

On June 27, 1921, the case of the State of Illinois vs. Eddie Cicotte et al opened in a courtroom under Judge Hugo Friend. The players faced numerous charges including conspiring to defraud the public and conspiring to commit a confidence in a game. The prosecution knew that they would have no case without the players' confessions. If they could only find Burns or Attell, then they would have all the information they needed. Ban Johnson, president of the American League was able to find him fishing in the Rio Grande. They needed Burns to testify, so they offered him immunity from prosecution. Burns reluctantly agreed. With a newly reformed case, the trial was soon to begin. Jury selection began and over 600 people were interviewed to serve.¹⁴

While on trial, none of the ballplayers were allowed to play professional ball. To keep themselves busy, some of the ballplayers started a semi-pro club called "The Major Stars." Only Cicotte and Weaver were not on the team. Cicotte tried to keep himself from the public eye, and Weaver was trying to clear his name and return

¹⁴ Linder, Douglas, "The Black Sox Trial: An Account," An Account of the 1919 Chicago Black Sox Scandal and 1921 Trial, University of Missouri, Kansas City, 15 November 2003 <<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/blacksox/blacksoxaccount.html>>

to baseball. He tried to distance himself as far away from the other players as possible. Since none of the players were allowed to leave the state or play professional baseball, they thought of other ways to keep busy and make money. Jackson opened a pool hall that was very popular. He would also sneak away and play ball under made up names in what was called "Outlaw Leagues" in the West.

On July 18, prosecuting attorney, George Gorman, delivered the opening statement. He started by reading from a copy of Cicotte's confession. Michael Ahearn, defense attorney for the ballplayers, objected to the use because the originals were stolen and it couldn't be proven that what Gorman read from was in fact the truth. Judge Friendly ruled that the copy of the confessions could not be used. This was the first of many successes that the defense had. When Comiskey took the stand and testified against the players on the charge of conspiring to injure the business of Charles Comiskey, the defense was able to show that in 1920, Comiskey made more money than he ever had since owning the club. With this information, the charge would have to be dropped. Another success for the defense, but their celebration was short-lived.

The next day, Burns took the stand. He gave his account of every meeting that took place and what was said between the ballplayers and him. The defense tried to shake him and make it look like he was lying, but they were not successful. They went through three days of questioning Burns on the stand. The big witness for the prosecution had lived up to his duty and was brilliant on the stand. However, the next day William "Kid" Gleason, manager of the White Sox, took the stand for the defense. Gleason was asked if the players had practiced the morning before the first game of the Series. Gleason said they had. The prosecution then showed that at the same time they were practicing, they were allegedly meeting with Burns about the fix. Later, during the cross-examination, he admitted that he couldn't be sure the exact time they were practicing, but the damage had been done, there was room for doubt on Burns' testimony. Again, the question of the charge of defrauding Charles Comiskey came into play when the defense put Harry Grabiner on the stand. Grabiner brought along with him the White Sox gate receipts for both 1919 and 1920. In 1919, Comiskey's club had made \$521,175.75

and in 1920, they almost doubled, making \$910,206.59. And 1920 was the year after the defendants had allegedly conspired to destroy his equity.¹⁵

On the 29th, both sides made their closing arguments. The defense argued that the players never intended to harm the public or bring a bad name to the game. Again, they made the argument that they never hurt the business of Charles Comiskey, which they showed on numerous occasions during the trial. They also argued that the real guilty party, Arnold Rothstein, was not in the courtroom. Why was he not indicted? The ballplayers' fate and outcome of the trial might have been sealed when Judge Friendly charged the Jury. It seemed as if the players were already found guilty of throwing the Series, but that wasn't the question at hand, the question was whether or not they meant to hurt the public. Friendly said that they must find the players guilty of not only throwing the ballgames, but that they meant to defraud the public. The jury deliberated for only two hours. The courtroom exploded with cheers when the ballplayers were found not guilty. The players could finally go back to their regular lives after not being able to play ball for the duration of the trial.

The Aftermath

Now that the ballplayers were found to be innocent, they expected to get back to their careers of baseball. When the trial started, they were promised to be reinstated into baseball if found not guilty. When the trial ended they expected to join their team. Kenesaw Mountain Landis had other ideas. He was the newly elected Commissioner of Baseball and decided not to let them back in. He stated that the eight players involved would never be allowed to put on a professional baseball uniform ever again. He stayed true to his word.

Joe Jackson, who is considered the greatest natural hitter of all time by many, retold his story thirty years after the scandal took place. In an article with *SPORT* magazine he told his side of the story. Jackson said he gave his best to baseball and if baseball couldn't do the same for him then he didn't want to be a part of it. He said that "until he died I had never gone before him, sent a representative before him, or placed before

¹⁵ Asinof, Eliot. *Eight Men Out: The Black Sox and the 1919 World Series* (New York: Holt, 1963) 265.

him any written matter pleading my case. I gave baseball my best and if the game didn't care enough to see me get a square deal, then I wouldn't go out of my way to get back in it."¹⁶ Jackson went home to Savannah where he lived with his wife for the rest of his life. He had a successful valet business that he started while on trial. He died in 1951, shortly before a scheduled appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show*.¹⁷

A lot of Jackson's recent fame has come from movies and other scandals. The movie "Field of Dreams" brings Jackson's ghost to a farm in Iowa to play ball with other dead ballplayers. The movie makes note that Jackson should never have been banned. He never attended any meetings with gamblers, he only took their money. He was the most valuable player for the Sox in the World Series. He set a record for the most hits in a Series and had the Series' only home run. The recent debate on whether or not Pete Rose, another player that bet on baseball, should be let into the Hall of Fame after being kicked out of baseball, has sparked a new wave of people saying Jackson, considered the best natural hitter, to be let in. After all, Jackson had been found to be innocent and his record for that Series shows he didn't throw it. The other players' lives have never received as much fame as Jackson's.

Eddie Cicotte and Swede Risberg played "outlaw ball" with various semi-professional clubs. After playing ball, Cicotte worked in the automobile industry in Detroit and Risberg worked in the fruit industry in California. Buck Weaver unsuccessfully appealed several times to Judge Landis for reinstatement in the major leagues. He played softball in Chicago for many years after the trial. He ran a drugstore and died of a heart attack in 1956. Happy Felsch ran a tavern in Milwaukee and died in 1964. Lefty Williams ran a pool hall for a while, but then moved to California and became a Christian Science Church worker and started a successful landscaping business. Eddie Cicotte was a game warden and security guard in Detroit and died in 1970. Fred McMullin died in California in 1952.

¹⁶ Bisher, Furman. "This is the Truth," *Sport*, October 1949.

¹⁷ Bisher, Furman. "This is the Truth," *Sport*, October 1949.

It was the biggest scandal to ever hit baseball. There have been times when players have gotten caught throwing games, but not eight players. This was the first time that the starting lineup was ever accused of selling out their profession. It was the first time that anyone had ever tried to throw a very public event like the World Series. People said it couldn't be done. They did it, but they failed to walk away clean. For them it was one of the biggest mistakes in their lives. It was something that the world will never forget.