

THE CAILLE BASEBALL

by Johnny Duckworth

The Caille Baseball machine could be considered the “Mona Lisa” of all the baseball machines, and it is highly sought after by collectors today. This ornate cast iron machine landed on the end of the bar in 1910 and was ready to swallow up some hard earned money. Baseball was the most popular game of the day and many companies would use this game to promote anything which could make them a little more money. For example; tobacco companies even jumped into the game and put small baseball cards in their tobacco to get the edge. One of those tobacco cards, the 1909 Honus Wagner, sold in 2007 for an astounding \$2.35 million.

The Caille Baseball is the spitting image of the earlier Caille Tiger with just a few cosmetic changes. Caille used the same castings which they had used on the Tiger machine, but changed the name on the front casting from “Tiger” to “Play Ball”. Some of the early baseball machines will still have the “Tiger” name present and the marquee is cut out in the rear. If you take the baseball casting off the front you will still find the tigers head hiding behind it on all the baseball models. They also updated the reel strip and instruction card to the baseball theme. Caille pictured the tigers head on the highest payout symbol “game won” and this was no surprise as their hometown team was the Detroit Tigers.



The machine has a 5 way coin entry which the operator can set up to play with pennies or nickels by only changing out the coin entry and instruction card. The payouts ranged from 5 cents for a “single” or “double”, 10 cents for a “triple”, 20 cents for a “home run”, and 30 cents for a “game won”. You wouldn’t want the reel to land on a “foul ball” or “out” as they were instant losers. The payouts came on the right side of the machine with a token rolling out of a slot and with the ring of a bell inside. The tokens were identified by the amount won, and

they were made with materials such as brass, copper, and aluminum.

The machines would later be picked up and revamped by The Silver King Novelty Company of Indianapolis and The Industry Novelty Company of Chicago. They were both known to recast their name in the front baseball and promote the machine as if it was their own. We have all heard of the O. D. Jennings Company and Ode D. Jennings was the president of The Industry Novelty Company. He would later change the name to the O. D. Jennings & Company in 1920 which we know so well.

All of these early cast iron machines are very special with collectors today. We can only imagine where the machines would have been located and the patrons who played them.

