

Title: Making the Big League- Bayfield's Ace Fireballer Jack Revoyr

Author: Scribes from the *Bayfield County Press*

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All transcriptions (SIC)

Intro: In Bayfield, baseball, the sport Abner Doubleday created and made famous was all the rage; was "king". So named "Town-ballers", "round-ballers", ballplayers with names like Revoyr, Knight, Gordon, Day, Bassett, Morrin, Packard, Gardner, Connors, La Bonte, Southmayd, McGrath, Arseneau, Boutin and Harrington were the adored stars on the local diamond. Spectators came from near and far to view their pride and joys. Pride and fanaticism prevailed. The good players were highly recruited, the great players were paid. Businessmen secured the teams, collected support from merchants and charged admissions. Reduced prices were offered on Lake Excursion ships and train lines that transported Harbor City rooters and players.

At the turn of the 20th Century baseball in Bayfield was hugely popular and the local teams were followed by loyal fans and wannabe-a-stars on the Omaha and Wisconsin Central railroad lines throughout Northern Wisconsin Michigan and Minnesota. On June 2, 1900 over 800 fans attended in Bayfield the Ashland match which, by-the-way, cost a mere two-bits to attend at the gate. Ashland, Duluth, Cornucopia, Grand View, Hayward, Iron River, Ironwood, Mason, Mellen, La Pointe, Port Wing, Pratt, Ontonogon, Odanah, Red Cliff, Rice Lake, Spooner, Superior, and Washburn all had teams recruited with the best "round-ballers" and "twirlers" available.

Of the names afore-mentioned only one ballplayer from the local nine of the early 1900's would make it to the Major League. The July 28, 1900 edition *Bayfield County Press* made special mention of "one of Northern Wisconsin's finest baseball teams" and its star pitcher, John "Jack" Revoyr. Coming to Bayfield circa 1900, the former ace of the Florence, Wisconsin ball team of 1898, quickly made a grand record for himself twirling and throwing scores of "goose egg" innings for Bayfield, the many times champion team of the Northern League.

Further said the *Press*, "Revoyr generally holds his opponents down to a few scattering hits, strikes out half a dozen or more men every day he pitches, and wins nearly all of his games. Jack will probably find himself in one of the minor league teams next year. Connie Mack, of the Milwaukee's, may give him a trial before the end of the present season. Revoyr was in the box for Bayfield and in the first three innings caused eight men to swing viciously at the atmosphere while the local team was busy running bases. Jack then slowed up so that the Hayward rooters would have a chance to say something. Even then they found difficulty in connecting with his twisters and save for the errors in Bayfield, feel they would not have secured a run. The Hayward pitcher proved an easy mark for our boys and was hit pretty hard. The final score was 8 to 4.

Bayfield's "Ace Fireballer" Jack Revoyr did indeed find himself being "called up" to baseball's Major League by Charlie Comiskey of the Chicago White Sox. Here told by the scribes of the *Bayfield County Press* are excerpts of Jack Revoyr's rise to glory and the decent.

12, May 1900: The baseball season in Chequamegon Bay was opened Sunday, May 6 at Washburn with by a match game with the Ashland and Washburn clubs. The attendance was good although the day was too cold for comfort on the benches. The score stood six for Washburn and two for Ashland. Jack Revoyr, of Bayfield, pitched for Washburn and was fully up to his good form of last season. Quite a number from Bayfield attended. *Bayfield County Press*

September 29, 1900: Jack Revoyr, Bayfield's star pitcher in all probability will leave here next season and enter the American League. His astounding performance at Duluth last Saturday surpassed the expectations of his most enthusiastic friends; shutting out a combination of the best batters in the league, pitching a winning game against the same on Sunday, had his support not failed him

The team which played against Duluth comprised the pick of the Chicago, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Indianapolis and Cleveland teams, and contained such stickers as Werden, Davis, Waldron, Pickering, Ehret, Rettger, and others whose batting averages range in the vicinity of 300 per cent this past season. As a result it is quite settled that Jack

will wear a Milwaukee uniform next year, and while his many baseball friends here will regret his leaving, they are more than pleased at his success.

5, January 1901, Saturday: – "Jack" Revoyr, the mainstay of the Bayfield team for the past two seasons in the best pitcher in the northern peninsula, will pitch in the league of the coming season. Comiskey, of the Chicago team, has sent a contract for John to sign offering him \$150 per month and all expenses paid. The team will commence playing sometime in April and the first trip will be through New Mexico. We have always predicted, since John pitch for the Bayfield team two years ago, that it would not be long before he would be in the league. John is a star pitcher, and during the past season's work made a record for him will self, that brought him into prominent position with the big leaguers, Andrew and the result was that Chicago, Milwaukee, and Minneapolis were all after him. We are glad to learn of John's reward and wish him success. *Bayfield County Press*

12, January 1901, Saturday: A special to the St. Paul Dispatch last Monday says: "Jack" Revoyr, who has pitched very successfully for the Bayfield ball team the past two years, has signed a contract with Manager Comiskey. Both parties are to be congratulated. Revoyr is a pitcher with lots of speed; all sorts of crooks; cannot be rattled: and has at many times demonstrated his ability to pull a game out of the hole. Bayfield County Press 19, January 1901: The Northwestern base ball league, to be composed of Duluth, Superior, Ashland and other cities looks like a go according to the Duluth paper. Wiggs, who pitched for Washburn last year, will be one of the Duluth twirlers the coming season.

9, March 1901 Saturday: the article in last week's paper saying that Tim Keefe has applied to the Ashland management for a position on the Ashland baseball team this season was a mistake. Mr. Keefe has signed with the St. Paul team of the Western Lake. *Bayfield County Press*

6, April, 1901: The latest from Jack Revoyr, the pitcher said to have been secured by Lennon for the St. Paul team, is he has gone with Comiskey's club. Revoyr was the holy terror of a pitcher when he carded from Ashland, Bayfield and other lumbering towns of northern Wisconsin. If he makes anywhere near good it is a cinch that Comiskey will never let go of him. *St. Paul Dispatch* in the *Bayfield County Press*

On Saturday last John Revoyr left Chicago with the champion White Stockings for Excelsior Springs, Missouri, where manager Comiskey intends to have the team do its spring practicing. In mentioning the team's departure from Chicago the *Tribune* says: "Comiskey uncovered a surprise in a pitcher reported that he signed some time ago but kept dark. He is a giant from the lumber region of Wisconsin who looks as if he could throw a ball through a four-inch plank. He comes from the same district as Wright-Patterson and Comiskey is wondering if he is as good a find. *Bayfield County Press*

April 12, 1901: Jack Revoyr is doing good work with the White Stockings at Excelsior Springs. He has pitched part of three games against the Milwaukee team and three times the Brewers have met defeat. There seems to be no doubt that John, with a little coaching, will be able to hold his own with the leaguers. *Bayfield County Press*

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May 4, 1901: To pitch for Duluth; the best news that the fans have received in many a day was given out yesterday when manager Hansell announced that Jack Revoyr, the big pitcher, who has been with the Chicago American League club this season, had written asking for a chance to play ball in Duluth, Minnesota. Hansell has the man all but signed and answered yesterday stating terms which will no doubt be accepted. Comiskey picked up Revoyr last winter, and had it not been for the rule limiting the number of players, the big Frenchman would've been a member of the White Stockings. He played in a number of games before the season opened and made good. If Revoyr comes to Duluth, as he is likely to do, he will do the bulk of the box work. *Duluth News Tribune* in the *Bayfield County Press* [End]

The transcriber knows not whence the "Ace Fireballer" threw his last pitch, nor for whom, but offers that his family settled in Central Wisconsin, Rice Lake area. [End]