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SI 311 HW 4 Analysis: Finding Park Value and Adjusting Willie Mays' HR Total Accordingly

Baseball is many things, and one could even argue it's one of the best venues for one to express almost any given talent either in the athletic, administrative, or statistical fields given its immense variety and availability of work. In this instance- we examine how a ballpark (another one of Baseball's many infinitely complex facets) can impact a player's Home Run total- either inflating or deflating it based on the environment. This is measured in park factor, anything above one is considered advantageous for hitters whereas anything below means the park had a detrimental effect on the total number of home runs it saw.

Using existing data from Baseball Reference, we're able to find that old Polo Grounds may have been a modern day paradise for home run hitters. With a park factor of 1.815 (using given data), we can conclude that relative to other grounds, the number of hits resulting in a home run here was very large. Comparatively, the historic Candlestick Park saw a more modest park factor of 1.042. Putting it just barely above par relative with respect to the impact its dimensions and characteristics had on home runs being hit.

Using the legendary Willie Mays, who played at both of the aforementioned ballparks, we can examine what his adjusted home run total is with respect to the park factor in both places. Willie Mays hit 187 home runs at Polo Grounds and after aligning this with our park factor we can find his adjusted home run total to be only 132.8506. While he is still one of the best players to ever grace the game one could be surprised to find such a stark difference. Comparatively,

Willie Mays hit 459 home runs at Candlestick Park. After aligning this with our park factor we can find his adjusted home run total to be 449.5911; this reaffirms what we already knew from the history of the game itself. Willie Mays was an incredible player who did not rely on any given ballpark to inflate his stats.

Works Cited

Willie Mays stats, height, weight, position, rookie status & more. Baseball. (n.d.). Retrieved September 30, 2022, from <https://www.baseball-reference.com/players/m/mayswi01.shtml>

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