

Mr. Michael Rose
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I have examined the bat provided to me on May 22, 2006 described as a professional model baseball bat manufactured by Hillerich & Bradsby Co. between the years 1917-1921. The bat is a Tris Speaker signature model, specifically identified by SCD Hologram # 25171 affixed to the end of the barrel.

I have additionally examined all documented records available from Hillerich & Bradsby Company relative to orders of professional model baseball bats placed by Tris Speaker. Those records included Pre-1930 shipping records (from yearly H & B logbooks 1920-1929, excluding 1924), H & B Tris Speaker and other relevant bat diagrams, and Post - 1930 H & B bat records. Additionally, I have reviewed a previous Letter of Opinion regarding this bat provided by MEARS and dated 8/11/05, which includes a discussion of an H & B lathe bat dated 8/22/05.

It appears that the discovery of the aforementioned lathe bat was the basis for the premise that Tris Speaker possibly used a 33 inch bat, despite the lack of any documentation in Speaker's records to support that position. The lathe bat itself is described in the provided notes as being 34 1/4 inches in length. Seemingly, that specific lathe bat is consistent with Speaker's documented bat order records and would not have been used to turn 33 inch bats during Speaker's playing career. The side-writing on the bat states "Speaker _24, make 33" K48L." That side-writing does not appear to be relevant to Speaker's playing career (which ended in 1928) as the reference to a model number indicates that the earliest that the side-writing could have been placed on the lathe bat was in the early 1940's, as model numbers did not exist before that time.

Accordingly, I regret to inform you that I am unable to authenticate this bat as being a Tris Speaker game used professional model bat. While it does appear to be a professional model bat, the dimensions of this bat are so dramatically uncharacteristic of Tris Speaker's documented ordering pattern, both in length (between 32 1/2 inches and 32 3/8 inches) and weight (approximately 33 ounces), that it is extremely unlikely that this bat was manufactured for the professional use of Tris Speaker, or that he was ever in possession of this bat during his professional career. In the absence of any additional compelling provenance, (including the lathe bat discussion dated 8/22/05) I am not able to authenticate this bat.

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Michael Specht
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