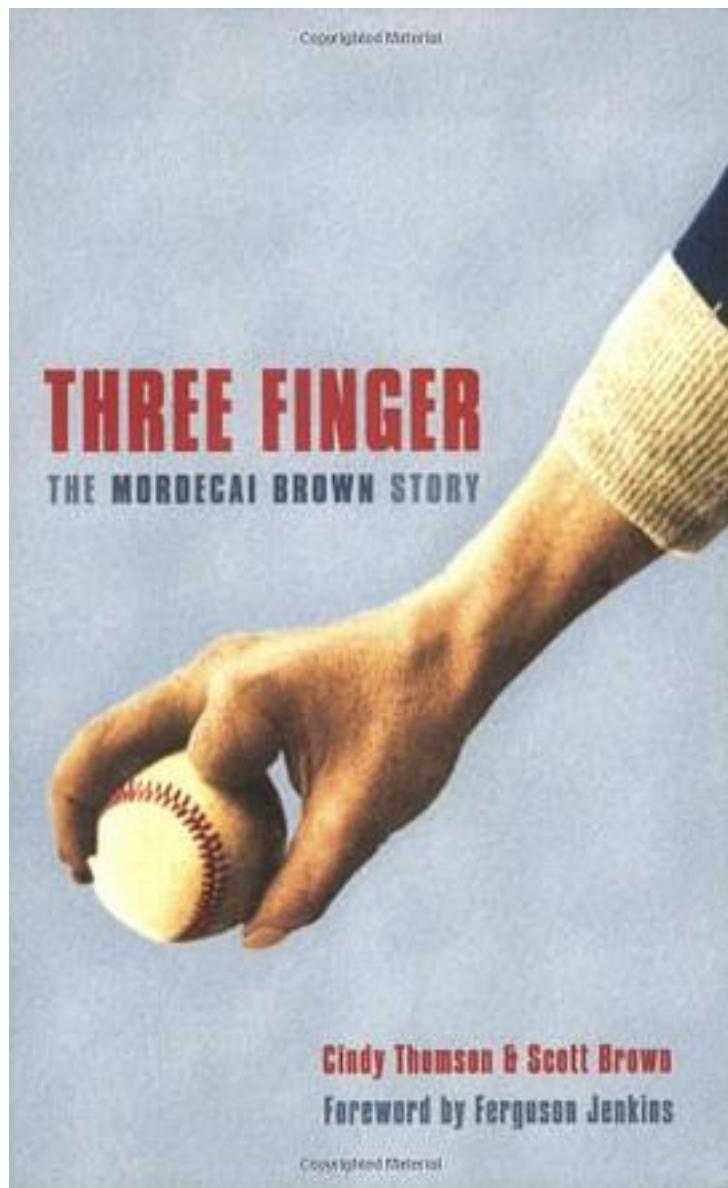


# Three Finger



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'When you start out with a disadvantage, you have to work harder to do what others take for granted. In the end, that gives you an advantage' - Ferguson Jenkins. On October 8, 1908, Mordecai Brown clutched a half-dozen notes inside his coat pocket. The message of each was clear: We'll kill you if you pitch and beat the Giants. A black handprint marked each note, the signature of the Italian Mafia. Mordecai Brown - dubbed 'Three Finger' because of a childhood farm injury - was the dominant pitcher for the great Chicago Cubs team of the early twentieth century, a team that from 1906 through 1910 was arguably the best in baseball history. Brown's handicap enabled him to throw pitches with an unconventional movement that left batters bewildered - the curve ball that Ty Cobb once called 'the most devastating' he had ever faced. How Brown responded to the Mafia's threats in 1908 mirrored the way he took life in general: with unflappable courage and resolve. Telling his story for the first time, Cindy Thomson and Scott Brown trail Mordecai from the Indiana countryside to the coal mines, from semipro ball to the Majors, from the World Series mound back down to the Minors. Along the way they retrieve the lost lore of one of baseball's greatest pitchers - and chronicle one man's determination to reach a dream that most believed was unreachable. Cindy Thomson is the author of a historical novel, "Brigid of Ireland", and a member of the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR). Scott Brown is a charter member of the Diamond Brotherhood, a SABR member, and the founder of the Mordecai Brown Legacy Foundation.

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