

# Value Over Replacement Grit

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≡ Menu

## Documenting the Existence of Unicorns in Baseball

March 4, 2013 by Diane

Unicorns are the “it” thing [nowadays](#). Even respected publications like “[The Week](#)” are doing stories on them (with and without accompanying rainbows and butterflies). But you may wonder, have there ever been unicorns in baseball?

Well dear reader, the VORG is happy to tell you that yes in fact, there HAVE been unicorns in baseball, to wit:

- [The Swiss Baseball Federation](#) has a team named the Hunenberg Unicorns, who have registered the awesome URL [www.unicorns.net](#). Not only are they baseball-playing Unicorns, but if you look real closely at the photo on that site, their opposition that day is none other than the “[Embrach Rainbows](#)”. It seems the Unicorns have been playing baseball for quite a while. According to an article in the [Beachwood Reporter](#).

*However, that show isn't particularly new. The 'Corns – needless to say, I'm already a big fan – have been around for 25 years, and there actually are three leagues in the federation. The vast majority of the players are Swiss nationals with a sprinkling of diehards like Bernhardt. Many of the athletes are just learning the game, but you won't hear any yodeling between the shortstop and second baseman. They understand infield chatter.*

*. . . With the 2013 campaign on the horizon, the Unicorns are seeking a coach. The former skipper, Texan Austin Proctor, stepped down and moved back to Fort Worth after the 2012 season. Only 27, he also coached Eagles Praha in the Czech Republic before moving over to Switzerland.*

- Closer to home, the mascot for the [New Braunfels \(Texas\) High School](#) is a [unicorn](#). In their most recent game, the school's baseball team [lost a 8-1 contest](#) to Dripping Springs. (I thought unicorns liked water, and if springs only drip, then they're really not springs now are they?)
- The word "unicorn" can be [translated into many languages](#). Of particular importance are the German and Dutch translations:
  - The German word for unicorn is "Einhorn"\*, and Eddie Einhorn is the longtime [Vice Chairman of the Chicago White Sox](#).
  - The Dutch word for unicorn is "Eenhoorn", and [Robert Eenhoorn](#) had a brief major league career as a reserve middle infielder in the mid-1990s. The Rotterdam-born Eenhoorn's post-MLB time has been spent [bringing the Dutch national baseball team to prominence](#):

*Eenhoorn is perhaps European baseball's biggest patron. Since quitting pro ball in 1998, he has turned his attention to his home country and built the Dutch national team into a solid international team — first as a player, then as manager and now as director of baseball operations for the Dutch federation. Since Eenhoorn's return, the Dutch became the first team in 36 years to beat Cuba in international competition at the Sydney Olympics in 2000; twice placed fourth at the Baseball World Cup, ending Cuba's six-year winning streak there, too; made two Intercontinental Cup finals; and twice beat a stacked Dominican Republic at the 2009 World Baseball Classic.*

*. . . Looking ahead to the 2013 WBC, Eenhoorn reckons the Netherlands is a team the world powers should watch for. "We're not their equivalent, but they have to be careful not to lose to us," he said. "If you have a mediocre day against the Netherlands, we'll beat you, no matter who you are."*

*. . . Eenhoorn's value to the Dutch game, however, lies mostly in his work in youth player development. Like many of the Dutch players with U.S. pro experience before him, he knew he had to share his knowledge. "I think that's only normal," Eenhoorn said. "It would be a desperate waste if you'd lived in that incredibly professional world and learned a ton and came home and never mentioned it again." So shortly after his return*

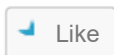
*from the U.S., he set up the Unicorns academy (“Eenhoorn” is Dutch for “unicorn”), the first baseball academy in Europe, where he set about molding the next generation of Dutch ballplayers.*

So there you have it . . . proof of the existence of unicorns in baseball!

\* Not to be confused with [\(Mark\) Eichhorn](#), former relief pitcher for the Blue Jays. “Eichhorn” is German for “[squirrel](#)”.



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