

PROFICIENT YEARS AT SPORTS

of the major league players are included more than once in *Who's Who in Baseball*, it should be clearly understood that Figure 1 does not present data for 3,126 different individuals. The 3,126 player-years were contributed by perhaps 500 to 600 different individual players. The following computation will enable the reader better to understand the cross-sectional data that are revealed in Figure 1:

22 = Number of editions of *Who's Who* that were canvassed.
 3,126 = Total number of player-years during the 22-year period.

$$22 \overline{) 3,126}$$
 142.09 = Number of player-years for each of the 22 seasons.
 16 = Number of clubs in the two major leagues

$$16 \overline{) 142.09}$$
 8.88 = Average number of players (excluding pitchers) included in *Who's Who* each year from each of the 16 major league clubs.

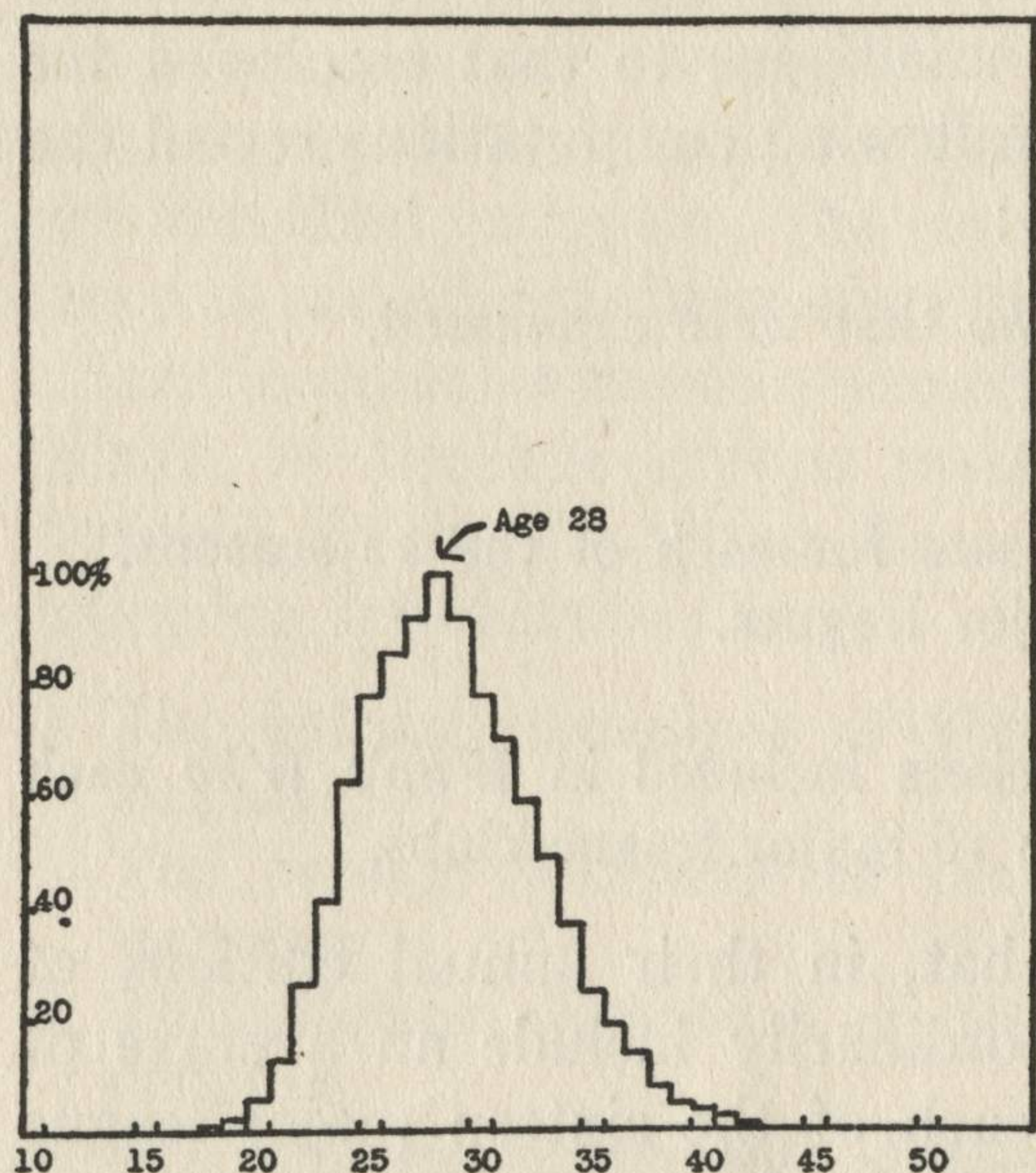


FIGURE 1. Chronological ages of major league baseball players (other than pitchers). A 22-year cross-sectional study involving 3,126 player-years.

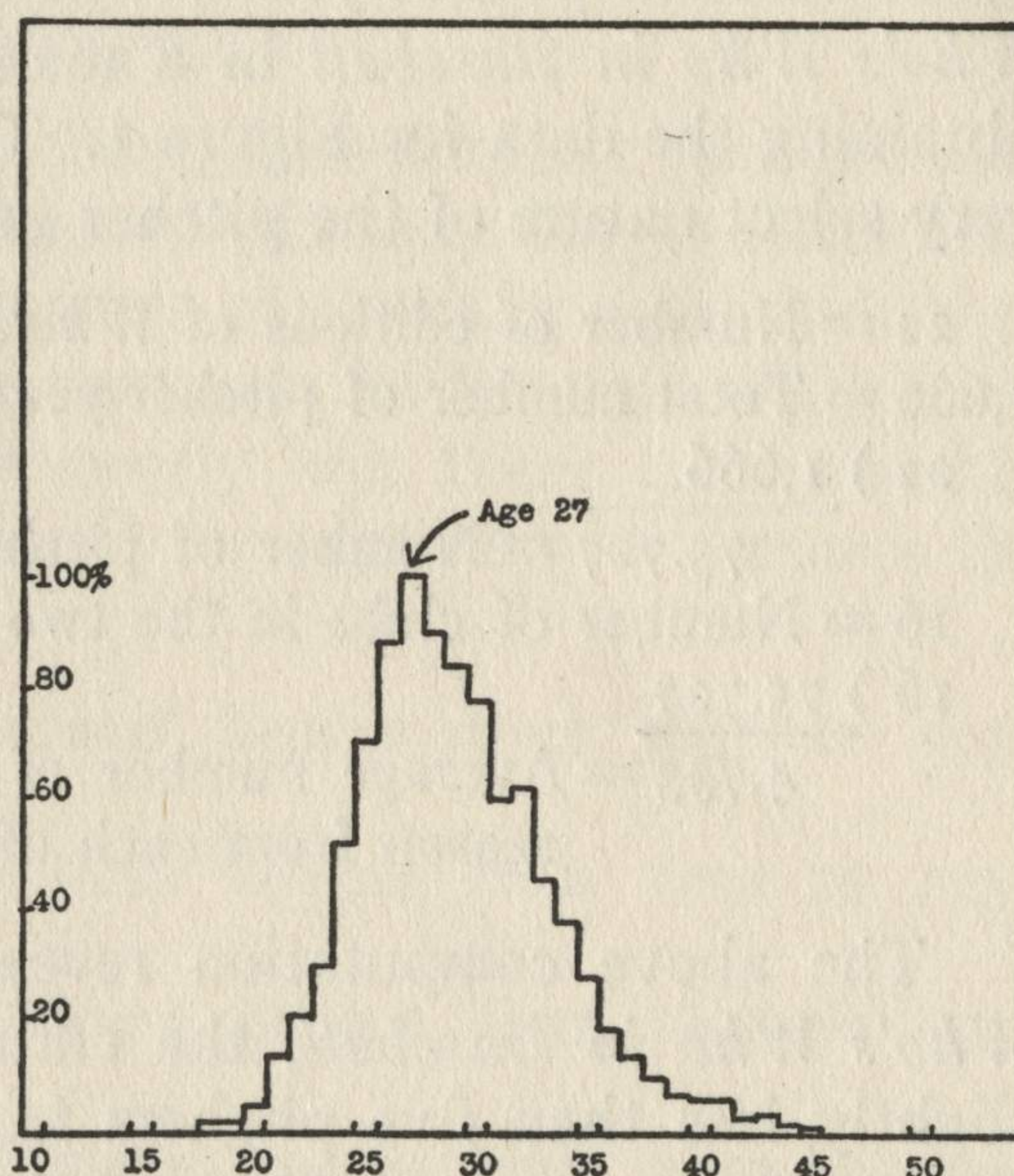


FIGURE 2. Chronological ages of major league baseball pitchers. A 22-year cross-sectional study involving 1,666 pitcher-years.

The foregoing computation reveals that, in compiling the annual editions of *Who's Who in Baseball*, the editors usually select an average of slightly less than nine men (excluding pitchers) from each of the sixteen major league baseball clubs. It seems obvious that, as a group, the individuals whose names are included during a given year in *Who's Who in Baseball* are the most talented baseball players of the United States (and of the world).

skill was exhibited one year prior to the publication of a given edition of *Who's Who*. It was likewise necessary to allow for the fact that the baseball playing season does not coincide with the calendar year. Since *Who's Who* publishes the day and the month, as well as the year, of birth, the latter computation afforded no insuperable difficulty.