

"OFFICIAL RANKING" OF LAWN TENNIS PLAYERS NOT GOOD FOR DEVELOPMENT

HANDICAPPING HELPS LAWN TENNIS AS MUCH AS OFFICIAL RANKING INJURES THE GAME

G. T. Adee, New President of United States Lawn Tennis Association, Has Chance to Make a Popular Move

THE storm of protest from many sections of the country when Maurice H. McLoughlin was ranked above R. Norris Williams, 2d, in 1914, and when William Johnston was placed above Williams and McLoughlin in 1915, is in itself sufficient proof of the futility of official ranking by a committee appointed for that purpose by the United States National Lawn Tennis Association. But there is another even greater reason why this foolish official action should be stopped—it is absolutely purposeless.

If the committee would rank players in groups for the purpose of handicapping them in sanctioned tournaments, there would not only be justification for it, but it would give lawn tennis a far greater impetus than it has received in years.

There can be no adequate reason advanced why writers should not express their opinions of the relative ability of the country's leading tennis players, nor is there any reason why newspapers and other periodicals should not actually have them ranked. But there is no excuse whatsoever for the present system of brutally ranking players, thereby engendering hard feeling, for the sole purpose of printing their names in the official lawn tennis guide.

New Regime Has Chance to Correct Errors

George T. Adee, recently elected president of the U. S. N. L. T. A., to succeed R. W. Wrenn, now has the opportunity to do something worth while. Through his influence there is no doubt that the association could be made to see that official ranking should be stopped, in so far as it applies to nothing more than the mere grading of players, and another method substituted which would rank ten or a dozen of the best racquetmen with the heaviest handicap, and so on down.

Before going into detail on the benefits that would accrue to players and the game itself if handicaps were in vogue in all tournaments except the national annual meeting, it is well to look over the field of sports and see what other branches have done in the matter of ranking. It doesn't take long to see that tennis is the only game in which the participants are ranked without purpose. Ty Cobb may be considered the best baseball player in the world, Eddie Mahan may be adjudged the peer of football players, Jerome Traversa is considered by many the best golfer in the country, Howard Drew the best sprinter, etc., but none of these men has been nor can he be officially declared better than his rival.

No Official Ranking in Other Sports

We have champions in baseball, golf and other sports, but they are so declared on the actual result of one or more competitive events, and not set on a pedestal by a committee. In tennis the winner of the national tournament, it is true, is looked upon as the champion of the United States, and justly so, but he should not by any chance be officially removed from the position he has won on the mere opinion of Walter Merrill Hall, E. C. Imman and George Adee, or any other group of men, no matter how excellent their judgment may be.

In short, the winner of the national tournament should be the only officially ranked player in the country, except as mentioned before, for the purpose of handicapping. It would be impossible to rank more than one player, according to this system, because the runner-up often gets into the finals through luck in the draw.

It has been stated in some quarters that the winner of the all-comers is not necessarily the best player in the country; that there are some who did not participate in the tournament that are better than the national victor. That may be true, but the only way to have a champion is to have a championship tournament, and if there are good players who are not able to participate, it is their misfortune and nothing more.

Benefits of a Handicap in Lawn Tennis

At one time the Ranking Committee of the U. S. N. L. T. A. did figure out the handicaps for their ranking players. This, however, has not been done recently. If the committee would cease its efforts to pick the one best, second best, etc., and choose them in groups of ten or a dozen, affixing proper handicaps and compelling the players to give these handicaps in all sanctioned tournaments except the all-comers, untold good would result.

One of the worst features of holding tournaments without handicaps is that it gives the so-called "cup hunters" a chance to keep winning various trophies year after year. There is no reason why a player of somewhat less ability should not be encouraged with victory occasionally, and the only way to accomplish this end is by the handicap system.

For years one of the most successful annual international tournaments held was conducted on the Riviera by the Nice Lawn Tennis Club. These tournaments were handicap affairs, and for this reason there was always a large and high-grade entry list, and a lot of enthusiasm among the spectators and followers of the game.

Helps in Developing Players' Skill

For actual development, too, there is nothing better than handicap play. When a champion meets a "dub," both at scratch, the "dub" is beaten before he begins and does not always put up the fight he might make if he were given a few points. By the same token the champion's play is likely to be very poor, because he knows that his opponent has no chance when playing with him on even terms. This hurts the game of the expert and fails to help the poorer player, while a handicap would keep the former "on his toes" all the time and would impel the latter to use every ounce of his energy and all of his skill to win.

In fine, it is hoped by hundreds of players and tennis followers that the new U. S. N. L. T. A. president, George T. Adee, will attempt to "free" himself from the Ranking Committee and get a position with the handicappers instead.

Couldn't Play the Movies and Basketball Too

Over in Plainfield there isn't any basketball team at Leon's school. While this is not such a severe blow to Philadelphia cage followers, it is tough on Plainfield's faithful rooters. And the worst of it is that it is entirely the fault of the players themselves. Coach Charley Wardlaw did a little Sherlock Holmesing on side and discovered that moving pictures were responsible for the poor "eyework" of his proteges on the basketball floor.

"It just comes down to this," said the coach to the young men, "you'll either have to give up Mary Pickford and Charley Chaplin or basketball. Geraldine Farrar may be all right in Carmen, but that doesn't win any games for us. Take your choice."

The team disbanded.

Lon Jourdet's Stand Is Correct

Coach Lon Jourdet, of the Penn basketball team, has declared that he will not permit his men to play a post-season series with the Princeton Tigers to break the tie for the intercollegiate championship. Jourdet is perfectly correct, for the reason that the games of the league postponed these games too long.

It was evident some time ago that Princeton might tie Penn. That was the time for the league to act. If they had made out a tentative schedule for the games to be played in case a tie did result, Penn would not want to abandon the chance to win the title from the Tigers. But no such action was taken, Penn has been out of training some time and it would not be fair to make them begin again and possibly continue for two or three weeks.

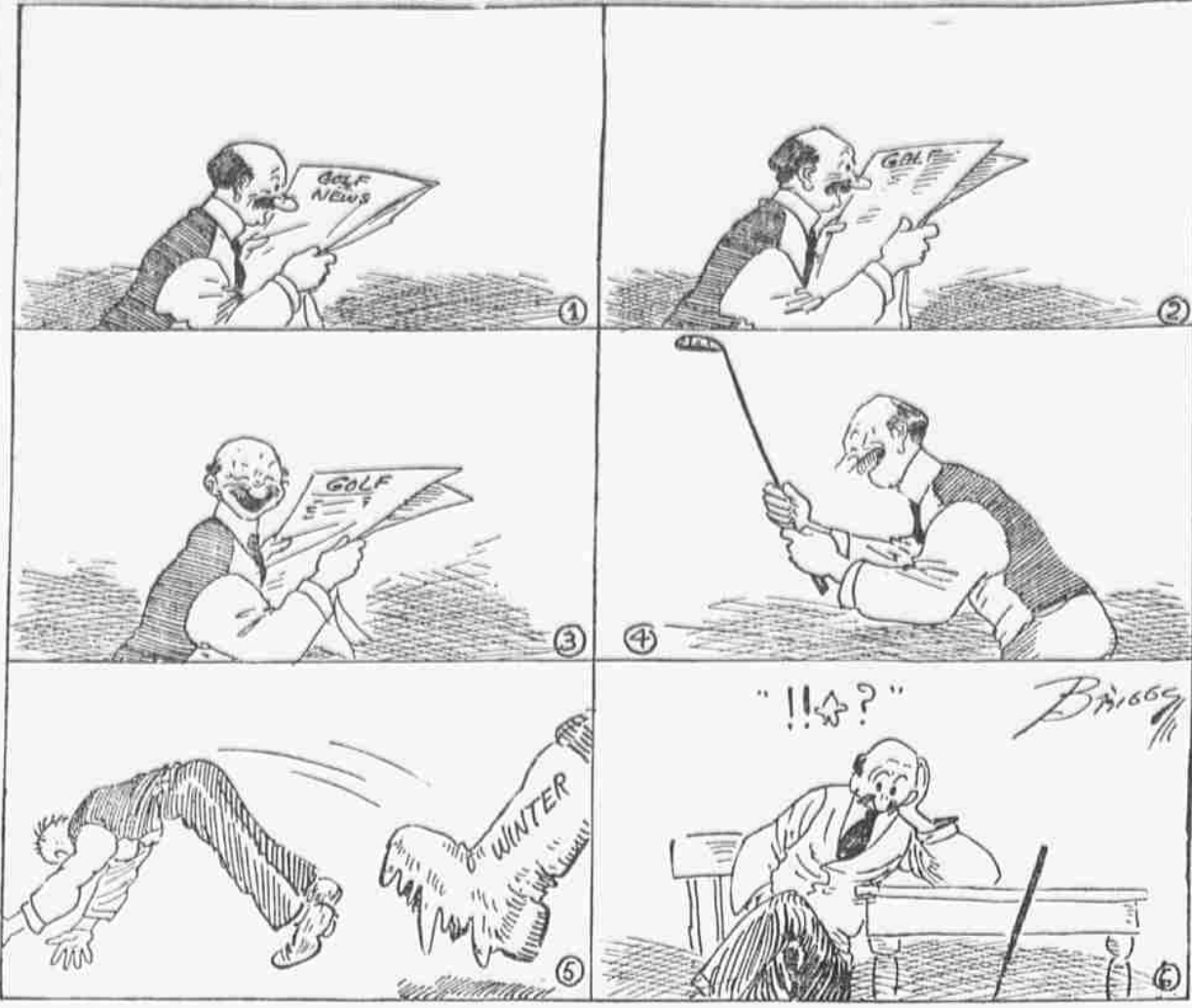
As usual, Jourdet wins.

Larry Chappelle, one of the biggest baseball failures in the country, will have a trial with the Cleveland Indians. This is Larry's third attempt to make good in the majors. He had trials with the White Sox in 1914 and 1915. It may take this time.

Writers are deploring the fact that Willard makes more in one fight than Ty Cobb, Hans Wagner and other baseball players make in years. That is true, but it is also just as true that Willard is not a perennial athletic plant as some of these diamond stars are.

It is sincerely hoped by the Philadelphia sports followers that the Fairmount Park races will be resumed. No better boost for the Quaker City nor for local sports could be offered than this great event, which netted Philadelphia charities big sums annually.

SOMEBODY IS ALWAYS TAKING THE JOY OUT OF LIFE



Tales of a Wayside Tee

By GRANTLAND RICE

(NOTE:—This series will take up the play of leading American amateur golfers. It is not a chronological or statistical study, but rather in the nature of random observations on some of the ways and achievements of our leading golf stars.)

No. 3—Francis Ouimet

HOW did it happen that Francis Ouimet, who was only an ordinary golfer up to 1913 came forward with such amazing swiftness? Not even Ouimet himself can explain the sudden rise to fame. In 1911 he tried to qualify in the amateur championships and failed. In 1912, at Chicago, he tried again and failed. And then suddenly a new star had risen in the golfing sky.

The first time we ever saw Ouimet was at Garden City, September, 1913, when the qualifying round of the amateur championship was under way. He had just holed out on the 18th green when some one asked his score. "Seventy-five," he replied, quietly. Which started an outbreak of excitement, and 75 was then low by several strokes. And that this start was no flash was proven two days later when he led Jerry Traversa, then amateur champion, through the 27th hole. Two weeks later Ouimet, who had never even thought of the open championship, had beaten Vardon and Ray in the greatest exhibition of golf ever given in America.

Beyond the Dope
"It happened to get going so suddenly," said Ouimet to our query. "I haven't an idea. All I know is that in playing over my home course at Woodland my best mark was 78. I average about 81 and 82, and could rarely beat this. Then one day I went out in the summer of 1913 and had a 73, the course record then. After that I rarely got above 77, and was generally around 74 to 75. My game seemed to have come to me in one day."

It has been said frequently that Ouimet is a golfer without nerves—that he is never upset. Nothing is true. There is no such golfer in existence. There never was. Ouimet, against Vardon and Ray was absolutely cool and apparently indifferent. But two weeks before, against Traversa, he had shown more than one sign of nervousness when Jerry began laying those fairway shots dead, and when Francis made his trip abroad in his first competition he was so nervous he almost missed the first ball, batting it at eight angles on the ground through the crowd. And later on, against Traversa, at Elkton, when Ouimet became amateur champion, in his first 12 holes he was so nervous he could hardly swing a putt, missing several short ones and frequently taking 3 on the green.

Big Advantage
Not that Ouimet is a nervous type. He simply has nerves, just as any other mortal has when things are not working right.

But he also has this advantage. He never lets his temper get the best of him, and you never see him fretting or worrying over a bad shot. As much as any other golfer we ever saw Ouimet takes the break of the game as it comes to him. He doesn't always expect to get a perfect hole in one, but he never lets a ball that is not to have all putts go down so he is well fixed when the tide turns the other way—psychologically.

Travis leads all American amateurs in driving, with any club and in 1-lying long approach putts dead. Travis leads all in driving iron play and in putting within 10 or 12 feet up to the cup. Ouimet, in all, is the best American amateur with the wood—that is, not only off the tee, but in brassie play through the green. He is a wonder at getting up a brassie shot from a close lie when distance is needed and he puts the chances in his hands with his brassie, and he plays it with a confidence that no one else has on this side of the Atlantic divide.

Ouimet is one of the few star golfers who use the interlocking rubber play the overlapping grip. In his wooden club play he also stands further away from the ball than most others, reaching out for the blow.

On short approach or putting you will find him nearly always beyond the pin, rarely short.

Last summer at Detroit he was drawn

LEAGUE TENNIS MATCHES TO BE HELD IN JULY

Change in Dates May Result in Entry of Norris Williams

Progress is rife in Philadelphia tennis this season. The Interclub League at its annual winter meeting proved again that this is the year of development of the game around our city.

Several exceedingly interesting things were done at the meeting. First and most important, a new club was added to the league. Cynwyd Club made application and was accepted.

Second, the dates for the interclub matches were placed in July this year instead of May, as usual. This should insure the participation of several prominent players, possibly R. N. Williams among them, who otherwise would not compete.

Third, the junior interclub series will be played this year. The management of it will be in the hands of a committee of one senior representative from each club. The schedule will shortly be drawn up at a special meeting of these representatives.

The advent of Cynwyd into the league marks a big step by this progressive little organization and should prove a big benefit to both the club and the league.

The Cynwyd team will be chosen from such men as Wallace F. Johnson, William T. Tilden, 2d, P. C. Osborne, Dr. P. B. Hawk, Harry Martin, C. N. Beard and others. The chances are that Johnson will play No. 1; Tilden, No. 2; Hawk, No. 3, and Osborne, No. 4.

This sounds like a team that even Philadelphia and Merion will have trouble with.

The Cynwyd Juniors can boast of our city indoor champion, Sterling Wilson, young Carl Fischer and several other boys, all of whom are good players.

The competition in both branches of the Interclub League this season should be very close and the standard of play high. Merion was last year's champion, with Philadelphia a close second.

KAUFF STARTS SOUTH

Accepts Terms and Signs Contract With New York Giants

NEW YORK, March 11.—Benny Kauff, surrounded by Secretary John B. Foster, of the Giants, and 22 white bats, is on his way to Merion, Pa., today, where he will sign terms with the New York club, and his contract is valued at \$10,000 a year, with a \$5000 bonus.

Kauff comes up to expectations; he will be liberally treated by the New York club, but, like the other players, he must go through the routine of development and discipline that the other players are subject to. Before leaving Kauff expressed the same confident optimism confidence in himself, and stated that he would surely surprise Manager McGraw.

To All Boy Baseball Teams:

HERE is an exceptional opportunity to get \$1.25 Baseballs FREE for your team this season.

THOUSANDS OF BRAND-NEW BASEBALLS EXACTLY LIKE THOSE USED IN THE BIG LEAGUE GAMES will be given away in the next few months. Any nine can win these valuable prizes if each member will give a few minutes of his time NOW.

FIRST-CLASS FIELDERS' GLOVES also will be given away in the same manner. START NOW and have your baseballs, etc., by the opening of the season. Challenges will soon be coming in, and every team should be ready with the RIGHT KIND of a ball and gloves that will hold the ball and take the sting out of it. too.

Apply at Room 230, PUBLIC LEDGER BUILDING. Out-of-town nines should address Room 230 by mail.

AMATEURS ARE CLASSIFIED

Herrman and Cobb Address New Baseball Federation

CINCINNATI, March 11.—At a meeting of the Rules Committee of the National Baseball Federation here yesterday recommendations were decided upon to divide the amateurs into two classes. All 17 who are recommended class A are supposed of none but those who are strictly amateurs, while class B should be composed of those who accept money for playing baseball, but who do not take up baseball for a livelihood.

The committee will also recommend championship series for both classes and intercity play.

A huge mass-meeting of amateur baseball players as well as the delegates to the convention were addressed by August Herrman, chairman of the National Baseball Federation, and by Joe Cobb, of the Detroit Athletics. Cobb lost a valuable diamond ring en route South and stopped here. He went back on the route he had taken when he lost the ring from the train, but failed to find it.

Taft Re-elected Captain
NEW HAVEN, Conn., March 11.—Charles I. Taft, second son of ex-President Taft, has been re-elected captain of next year's basketball team.

ONE LOOK! THAT'S ALL
National A. C. National A. C. TONIGHT—MAY SHARP—TONIGHT Joe Azvedo vs. Johnny O'Leary Patsy Cline vs. Eddie Morgan THREE Other Star Bouts

OLYMPIA A. A. Broad & Bainbridge, MUNDAY NIGHT—8:30 SHARP, Whitey Fitzgerald vs. Frankie Little STEVE BLOOMER vs. DETROIT ATHLETICS GEORGE BLAIRBURN vs. ABE KARAGOFF RICK FLEMING vs. EDDIE MOY Benny Leonard vs. Sam Robideau Adm., 50c. Hat, Res., 50c. Arena Res., 75c. 81

PALACE A. C., NORRISTOWN, MARCH 11 McCARRON—BORREL 15:00 10-Round Semi-6-Round Quarter 21:00, 21:30, 22:00. Editors: 21 N. Juniper

NEWS OF THE BOWLING ALLEYS

Wyndham continued his good work, defeating Merion in three straight games in the Greater City League, courtesy last night. The scores were: Merion, 2-1; Wyndham, 2-1. In the first game, the margin being 13 in the first round, 2-1; Wyndham, 2-1. In the second game, 2-1; Wyndham, 2-1. In the third game, 2-1; Wyndham, 2-1. Individually, Nick Graham and Merion, for the White Elephants, and Merion, for the White Elephants, defeated Wyndham, rolled well.

Merion, the champion, buried the Giants under three reverses, putting up scores of 100, 104 and 102 in the Greater City League, courtesy last night. The scores were: Merion, 2-1; Wyndham, 2-1. In the first game, the margin being 13 in the first round, 2-1; Wyndham, 2-1. In the second game, 2-1; Wyndham, 2-1. In the third game, 2-1; Wyndham, 2-1. Individually, Nick Graham and Merion, for the White Elephants, and Merion, for the White Elephants, defeated Wyndham, rolled well.

The White Elephants managed to win the old game from Abington. The score was: Merion, 2-1; Wyndham, 2-1. In the first game, the margin being 13 in the first round, 2-1; Wyndham, 2-1. In the second game, 2-1; Wyndham, 2-1. In the third game, 2-1; Wyndham, 2-1. Individually, Nick Graham and Merion, for the White Elephants, and Merion, for the White Elephants, defeated Wyndham, rolled well.

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