

MANY ROOKIES GET THEIR TRIAL AS BIG LEAGUE BALL PLAYERS, BUT FEW ARE CONVICTED

SEDNAN'S ABSENCE FROM JASPER LINE-UP SATURDAY NIGHT A BLOW TO PROFESSIONAL BASKETBALL

Failure to Put Strongest Team on Floor for Important Game With Greystock Five Causes Unfavorable Comment From Suspicious Fans

THE Eastern Basketball League has been unable to dodge the hoodoo which invariably hobbles up to blight a "world's series." The absence of Barney Sedran, star forward of the Jasper five, on Saturday night in the second game of the title series is causing unfavorable comment, which promises to deal the cage game a damaging blow at a time when it should be gaining popularity with giant strides. The fact that a number of reasonable explanations are offered makes little difference to the fans, who cannot forget that Sedran's absence made it easier for Greystock to tie up the series and make a third and deciding game necessary. The very multiplicity of excuses offered simply intensifies the dissatisfaction of the fans, who are always disposed to view with suspicion a short series which is tied up, whether the sport be baseball or basketball. Admitting that the men in charge of the Eastern League series did all that they possibly could to get Sedran on the floor, it is evident that they erred in not coming forward with a frank statement of the reason for their failure. Such a course would have done much to disarm the suspicious critics. Instead, they come forward with the explanation that the star was injured in the game Wednesday night and was unable to appear for this reason, which makes them vulnerable to the charge of dealing unfairly with the fans for not ascertaining this earlier and making an announcement before the night of the game.

The basketball public is not asked to accept this explanation alone, however. The fact that Sedran had arranged to be married on Sunday night, and therefore could not be expected to sit around a cage the night before, is also offered as an excuse for his absence. So the basketball fan can take his pick. If he doesn't like one explanation he can consider the other, and if he doesn't fancy either he can tie up some sort of a compromise.

WHAT a frightful riot the baseball fans would have made had Hoblitzel stayed away from the second game of the Red Sox-Dodgers series last fall—and had the Dodgers won, tying up the series.

Series Should Be Staged With Great Care

SEDNAN was badly hurt in the first game in a mix-up with Ally McWilliams. His head was cut, and it is said there were some slight internal injuries. With a man so severely used up at the start of an important series the promoters would have done well had they taken some steps to ascertain the extent of the player's injuries and the possibility of his appearing in the next game. From all that can be learned, however, they did neither, and were amazed when Sedran did not put in an appearance Saturday night. Some of the players were questioned as to Sedran's absence and their attention called to the importance of having him appear, but they took the attitude that they couldn't get him to play if he didn't want to, and that it was none of their business, anyway. It was said yesterday that Sedran's family raised objections to his basketball playing when he returned home Wednesday night so badly used up, and this, together with the fact that the cards were out for his wedding, led the star to stay away. Jack Linton, of the Jasper Club, is authority for the statement that Sedran will take part in the final and deciding game Wednesday night.

Both the promoters of the series and the player are apparently underestimating the importance of the cage classic, not as a contest, but as the leading professional basketball event of the year. The eyes of the sport-loving public are on the Jasper-Greystock games and great care should be exercised in staging the series. If Sedran was so seriously injured that he could not appear on Saturday night he is entirely justified in the course he took. On the other hand, if he failed to appear without just cause it is patent that he failed to realize the importance of his name appearing in the line-up.

THE league officials owe it to the sport of basketball to put their best teams on the floor for this series, and they should allow no player to absent himself without just cause.

All Kilbane's Got Is Stuff and Title

JOHN KILBANE, featherweight champion, would not be known in every latitude and longitude where there is need for a featherweight champion except for one thing, probably, and that "slight thing" is, he has the title. No defunct champion awarded the belt to Kilbane by naming him as his heir, nor was it by accident that the laurels rest on the little man's curly-haired crown. It is there because he has all the stuff, and then some. He can give the other fellow everything that is written under the head of punching, blocking, footwork, but most of all he can give the enemy a right-hand wallop that is one of the most compelling fist projections now operating in American rings.

J. Kilbane has not won his title and then spent his waking moments jumping from place to place in order to evade a flock of lesser lights nipping at his heels for bouts. He cleaned them all up in his class and there isn't any nipping being done. When Johnny comes marching along they all lay low and cease to murmur. He now has to go out of his class to get bouts. He has been fighting lightweights and is anxious to meet Fred Welsh, Benny Leonard and Johnny Dundee, one a night, in order to clean up that division speedily for the lightweight championship, settling the matter beyond the peradventure of a doubt, as it were.

FOR all his willingness to give a fight to all comers; for all his elegant boxing, his knock-out ability, so popular in other fighters; and for all his great reputation as a peerless boxer, Johnny has been getting a touch of the razor lately in his appearances. Just why so fine a fellow personally as Kilbane is, and such a trying-every-minute-to-please-the-crowd-fighting boxer as he is, should be the target of scattered booing is one of the most difficult things of the game to analyze.

Perhaps Psychology Explains It

IT MAY be because the crowd is always, or more times than not, against the top horse. It is said to see the underdog make a showing. But it seems that the psychology of Kilbane's methods comes nearer home. He does not act like the greatest of them all. And just for that reason it is hard to overcome the impression that he is not the champion his record proves him. There is an I distinct pulling in the crowd to have him "shown up." When no one is able to, it would seem that the booing is somewhat the expression of disappointment by many in the rabble. Johnny climbed through the ropes at the Olympia a week ago, the first one in the ring, without ostentation of any sort. He gave little sign to what cheering was done and went at once to his corner, where he sat down, removed his bathrobe and sat in plain green woolen tights; no great American flag at his belt, nothing but J. Kilbane, ready and anxious for business. The only one with him was Jimmy Dunn, manager. Kilbane does not play to the crowd in the slightest degree.

Contrast Benny Leonard, all bows, handshakes with every one in sight, much silk tights, flag, silk-shirted crowd in his corner, full of clever grandstand stuff—the crowd is always with him. Kilbane outside the ring is the most sociable and agreeable of humans with his friends and he has a heart as big as a house, as all who know him will testify.

Phils Not Hoodwinked in Deal

THE story printed recently in a Philadelphia newspaper regarding the purchase of Jimmy Zinn from Waco last year one month after he had thrown out his arm has been denied by President Baker and Pat Moran. According to the article a Philly scout paid \$2000 for the big pitcher, evidently not knowing that he was purchasing a cripple. It was also stated that Zinn had not thrown a ball in the training camp, despite the fact that he has been working every day since he has been there.

According to President Baker, Zinn has not been purchased from Waco or any other club. Furthermore, when the scout went to Waco to look over Zinn last summer he was informed that the pitcher had injured his arm and was then at his home. However, a deal was made with the Waco club whereby Zinn was to be taken to the training camp of the Phils and given a tryout, and if he makes good on or before May 1 the Waco club is to receive \$3000 for his release.

The Phils were not taking any chances, the scout wasn't hoodwinked and right now Zinn is owned by both the Waco club and the Phils. Pat Moran, Alexander and Bill Killefer are working every day with the big fellow and his work is improving. His arm is not bothering him, and in a week or so he will start in one of the games.

"Crawford Has Not Retired"—Hugh Jennings

IT'S all wrong, Mawruss, it's all wrong! Hugh Jennings is authority for the statement that "Wahoo Sam" Crawford is still with us and will be active when the big act is put on. The report has been freely circulated all over the country that the noted slugger was through, and the fact was commented on recently in these columns. At the same time a telegram was addressed to Manager Jennings asking a statement on "Wahoo Sam's" status. The following reply was received: Crawford working hard with Tigers, no truth in reported retirement.

HUGH JENNINGS

Conclusive enough, of course, and our lament on Crawford's departure from Philadelphia was premature. Sam is working hard and he has not retired, but he is among those present when the season starts is still a matter

AIN'T IT A GRAND AND GLORIOUS FEELIN'?



CONDITION OF HIS TWIRLERS IS WORRYING CONNIE MACK

Bush, Meyers and Jing Johnson Can Go the Route, But Others Falter—Keefe, Discovered by Whitey Witt, Shows Promise Against Jacksonville

By ROBERT W. MAXWELL

JACKSONVILLE, Fla., March 27.—CONNIE'S reconstructed Athletics looked pretty good against the Roses, of Jacksonville, yesterday, in that exceedingly moist ball game, which opened the local season. Despite the slow, muddy diamond and intermittent showers, the come-backs performed creditably, and pulled some stuff that leads one to believe that some other club in the American League will occupy the submarine position this fall. Grover, at second base, and Bates, at third, seemed to be an improvement over the athletes who occupied these positions last year, and the other seven months of the team shaped up like regular big leaguers.

Mack is worried over the condition of his flock of pitchers, but hopes they will round into shape before the season opens. Although they have been working for a month under ideal conditions, they have not yet hit their stride, and it is doubtful if more than two or three are able to go the full route. Joe Bush is in form, and so are Meyers and Jing Johnson, but the others are in and out, with the accent on the out. Yesterday Meyers started the sharpshooters, and in three innings yielded but one hit. Parnham, who succeeded him, did not look so good, as he was wild, walked three and hit one in his three innings. Keefe, who was discovered by Whitey Witt some place in Maine, finished the combat and showed the earmarks of a corner.

Keefe had lots of "stuff" and it was against the foe. He was bending them over from all angles and had the Roses at his mercy. He grew careless in the seventh, after he had retired two, and a pass, followed by a smacking double, shoved a run across the plate. With more experience Keefe will make a valuable twirler.

Military training is taken seriously in this camp, and the players are learning the war game more and more each day. They are rehearsing in the army every morning this week, and use real, but unloaded, muskets. Connie has a bunch of players that when they fall into line the scene resembles the annual review of the standing army of Switzerland.

There's enough ball players down here to stop a small war and the nervous persons in Philadelphia have no cause for worry with the Athletics on the job.

There was another battle today with the same cast of characters. The natives in this section enjoy baseball very much and even take a sea voyage to see the games. Rose Park is across the river in South Jacksonville, which is another Camden. Real fireworks make the trip occasionally and traffic is aided very much. There also is

HOME DEFENSE LEAGUE IDEA OF JACK O'BRIEN

Former Boxer Gives Use of Gym for "Preparedness" Purposes in Event of War

Philadelphia's Jack O'Brien is organizing the Philadelphia Home Defense League, and the former boxer has opened the doors of his gymnasium for military instructions. His move is entirely patriotic, as no exercises will be charged to citizens anxious to begin "preparedness" work.

Here's what O'Brien has to say: "Any minute after war is declared it may reach your doorstep or mine. The protection of ourselves and those we love best depends not on what we do then, but what we do now."

"I am organizing the Philadelphia Home Defense League. I offer military instruction under direction of experienced drill masters, the use of my large gymnasium and all body-building apparatus, together with a training in physical development and self-defense, personally directed by myself. There are no dues or charges of any kind connected with this training."

Rookies and Regulars

Waco, Tex.—Benny Kauff expects to steal home in today's game between the Giants and Waco. He did steal home yesterday, and Benny has barely been able to eat since.

Dublin, Ga.—The battered Braves—allegedly—and the Yankees will make their postponed debut here today. Rain nearly washed the Macon Park away.

Hot Springs, Ark.—Just like the New York big league teams, the Brooklyn champions to the training camp behind and made for Macon to battle the Red Sox tomorrow.

Fort Worth, Tex.—Tyrus Raymond Cobb, "king of 'em all," joined the Tiger squad last night and reported himself never in better shape, but saying he would work hard from now until opening day to get his batting average adjusted for the long drive. Third baseman Viti still is a holdout.

New Orleans—It would make Jack Barry and Donnie Bush green with envy if he were yesterday, at Albany, a recruit pitcher. Milligan, hurt by a knee ball against the Hoosiers for six innings, he retired to allow Al display his prowess. The score favored the Hoosiers 8 to 6.

Columbus, Ga.—Al Maxmuth says Jack Hendricks' Indianapolis Indians are the best team he's ever seen. Hendricks is a recruit pitcher. Milligan, hurt by a knee ball against the Hoosiers for six innings, he retired to allow Al display his prowess. The score favored the Hoosiers 8 to 6.

Yuma, Ariz.—The Cubs left their bats and baseballs in the desert. The Cubs left their bats and baseballs in the desert. The Cubs left their bats and baseballs in the desert.

R. A. G. Initials of Grover, Athletics' Musical Man

JACKSONVILLE, Fla., March 27.—Grover, the leading candidate for second base duty this coming season on the Athletics' team, has been the musical headliner ever since the squad arrived here for the spring training. Grover came all the way from Seattle, Wash., traveling the greatest distance of any one in the band. He can play any kind of piece of music suggested in the most appealing air. When his trunk arrived the other day this was accounted for, as the initials read R. A. G. The star infielder's full name is Roy Arthur Grover.

CATCHER GIBSON ELIGIBLE TO PLAY WITH N. Y. GIANTS

CINCINNATI, March 27.—Catcher George Gibson, formerly of the Pittsburgh team, has been declared eligible for service by the National Baseball Commission. The New York Nationals obtained Gibson last fall, when Pittsburgh asked waivers on him. Gibson, however, refused to be released to join the Giants, which team had retained him on its 1917 reserve list.

Haas Rites Gym Captain

NEW BRUNSWICK, March 27.—Henry Haas of Jersey City, a sophomore, has been elected captain of the Rutgers gymnasium team.

FOOD FOR FANS FROM FLORIDA

Walter "Lefty" Anderson, who holds several records for snail-paced hitting, eats up the results of the country, which is on a diet of hard rapids.

It would not be surprising to see Mack start out as a pitcher, former University of Maine collegian, at second base in the American League after this summer has improved wonderfully since last summer.

Manager Mack has been drilling Eddie King at first base in order to do understudy duty for Duffy McGuire.

Billy Johnson, the Chicago boy, who is in line for first utility outfielder, has been awarded the result of the basketball game between the Illinois A. C. and the Brigham Young Y. M. C. A. for the A. C. championship of Chicago. Connie has a bunch of players that when they fall into line the scene resembles the annual review of the standing army of Switzerland.

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CHICK EVANS IS NOT IN NORTH-SOUTH TOURNEY

Norman Maxwell and Grant Rice Play With Golfers from Above. Mason and Dixon

ATLANTA, March 27.—The program for today in the North and South golf play called for a team match at medal play between the following teams:

NORTH: Norman Maxwell, Robert Jones, E. C. Baill, Perry Adair, Fred Blum, Tom Briscoe, Grantland Rice, Chick Ridley, George Adair. Disappointment came when it was announced that Charles Evans, Jr., the national champion, could not arrive in time for the tournament.

Bowling News

Mucko League matches were close and exciting last night, and good scores resulted. White Hawks, Eagles and Robins had totals more than the Red Sox.

Millard led the high scores, with 224 pins. Howell and George also registered scores of 214 and 213 each.

West Philadelphia lost two games to Third, tenth and Cherry in the U. S. I. Company League, which gives Third a clear lead for first place.

Pascoe, of Germantown, cracked out a 244 score in his first game.

Wilmet, of Keystone A, leads the three-men competition, with nine victories out of ten games. The same team finished last in the five-men season just closed.

Pennsylvania Railroad is setting pace in Philadelphia League, but is being pushed hard by Henry Wolfe's Melrose squad.

The champion Liberty Bell is having its work cut out in the Philadelphia League. It now occupies fifth position in the race.

Trust and Insurance League wound up its bowling season at Casino Aerie in a whiz-bang. The Fidelity Trust Company team and the Real Estate Title Company, tied in the championship, silver cup presented by Emil Rosenberger, won by Fidelity Trust.

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TWENTY-SIX IS CHARMED ERA WHEN BIG LEAGUE BALL PLAYER REACHES TOP-HOLE CREST OF DEVELOPMENT

Statistics and Veterans Bear Witness to This—By Peculiar Coincidence 26 Is Average Age of Yankee Regulars—Age Applies to Football

By GRANTLAND RICE

WHEN Colonel Ernest V. Smith, chief of staff of the southern division, was paying his official visit to the Yankee camp, at Macon, Ga., there was one matter in which he was more than interested. This concerned the average age of the club.

This same query has come up often before. More than one noncombatant has asked from time to time the average age of a major league squad. Is it under thirty or as far down as twenty-five?

The Veteran

As some philosopher has doubtless remarked before, Time has a way of piling along. Eight years ago a youngster broke in with Connie Mack's Athletics. Today he is the Yankee veteran, the oldest member of the squad. His name is John Franklin Baker. John Franklin is now thirty, but in baseball only a few strides this side of the road's end.

The Yankees are younger than most major league squads, and yet the elastic age of their average is an interesting matter.

Average Age

Taking in the complete squad there are thirty-three Yankees in camp. Their combined age is 784 years, which means an average for the entire squad of twenty-three years and nine months. Quite a number of these recruits who will not be carried. To get closer to the exact situation we took the roster of the seventeen who were accounted as regulars last season. The average age of these seventeen is twenty-five years and nine months, just two years and one month of the entire squad in camp today.

As remarked before, the Yankees are a young club, and yet their average is not greatly below the average of many others. Offhand, we should say that the average major league age today was between twenty-six and twenty-seven years, which is very close to the sportive prime.

More Vital Statistics

Some time ago we displayed a set of statistics which showed that the greatest average age in stardom was around twenty-six—at which age Lajoie, Wagner, Waite, Mathewson and many others were at their best.

It is a quaint coincidence that the average age of the major leaguer is also twenty-six, showing again that for the trained athlete this age is the prime, proved in two directions.

At twenty-six a man apparently not only has his full strength and power, but also sufficient experience and judgment to put this physical power to its best use. He may be as good physically at twenty-three as he is at twenty-six. But at twenty-three he lacks the experience and the discretion that three additional years of competition bring.

The Top Age

The Yanks are unusual in not having a ball player over thirty. There isn't another

club in baseball that can show any such temporal circumstance.

In summing up the list of Yankee regulars we find that while the top age limit is thirty, the youngest age is twenty-two. In the full squad of thirty-three there are twenty-three men who are twenty-five or under and twelve men who are twenty-three or under.

So apparently the average big leaguer makes his start around twenty-two and is through around thirty, giving him something like eight years of service. There are any number who have served much longer than eight years, but there are also any number who have made good at twenty-two and have then faded out at twenty-six or twenty-seven.

Slowing Up

Some time ago we had a talk with a ball player of thirty-two as to when the slowing up process arrived. He stated that in his case he began to lose just a trifle of his speed at twenty-seven, but that it was not until he was twenty-nine that he finally realized the fact. But by looking back he could distinguish an almost imperceptible slowing up that suddenly presented itself as an established fact, no longer to be doubted. This man was one of the fastest in the game, so even after he had begun to lose his speed he had sufficient quantities of it left to hold his own. It simply began to dawn on him at twenty-nine that he was losing certain hits, being thrown out by a foot or so on infield trips that he was formerly beating out.

The football game is hard to figure, as nineteen, of twenty of those engaged in this sport retire from the game at the close of their college careers, when they are still short of athletic prime.

There are few football players as old as twenty-six, yet at twenty-six they would be at their best. At twenty-six they would still have all the speed and power of youth, with greater stamina, a greater general ruggedness and far more experience.

An entry in sport comes to his prime quickly. After this he begins to descend by somewhat slower measure.

The ball player who starts his big league career at twenty-two may come to his best game in two or three years with something of a rush, and then carry the fading out process for eight or nine years longer.

As they move on in the game beyond thirty it is not so much a matter of heart or arteries or general condition as it is a matter of elasticity and suppleness. At forty a man might have all the vitality he had at twenty-six, but his old elasticity would be missing. He might carry as great a burden, but he couldn't carry it at any thing like the same speed. He might walk as far, but he could never run as fast.

Yale Five Elects Kinney 1918 Captain
NEW HAVEN, Conn., March 27.—Orson Alonzo Kinney, of Weehawken, N. J., has been elected captain of the Yale basketball five for next season.

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