

CONNIE MACK MAY WIN 1917 AMERICAN LEAGUE PENNANT, BUT CONNIE MACK WON'T ADMIT IT

IS FIFTY PER CENT STRONGER THAN LAST SEASON, BUT MAY FAIL TO CLIMB OUT OF CELLAR PLACE

Connie Mack is optimistic, but declines to commit himself regarding outcome—Team shows wonderful improvement over 1916 misfits

Athletics are at least 50 per cent better this year than last. Whether a pennant club can be one and one-half times as good and improve enough to be a pennant contender for the pennant remains to be seen, but from present indications the House of Mack will be in the running from the start to the finish and will be left in the dismal swamp as soon as the other teams get under way. It is the opinion of the bad habits of the scribes on the training trips to enthrone over the pennant of the club with which they are traveling and slip it the pennant before the games are played. This is because they see but one team in action, and the other teams look so good and the opponents so weak that they are misled. We are not surprised that the Athletics will win the pennant or even get out of last place this year.

We contend, however, that the club is much stronger, and had the same strength been put in the field last year more games would have been won. More games will be won this year than last, but that hardly could be called a prediction. It's almost a certainty. Connie Mack is more optimistic over the prospects of his team than in the last two years. He sees a successful season ahead, but will not commit himself regarding the outcome. He knows that seven other clubs also look good, and if each plays as well as last year it will be a hard job to get up in the running.

"I am pleased with the work of the players," says Connie, "but it is entirely too early to predict anything. I do not think it would be fair to the fans in Philadelphia to make any rash statements, because they should not be deceived. They can see for themselves what kind of a team I have when we meet Washington on Wednesday, April 11. They will be surprised, no doubt, but whether they will be surprised enough to take us seriously is another matter. I have worked hard and spared no expense to give Philadelphia a good team, and I believe I have done something toward that end."

"If I could honestly say that the Athletics were good enough and strong enough to beat out one team in the American League I could say that they had a chance to win the pennant. Even Washington, which finished seventh last year, won thirty more and lost forty less games than we did. That club is just as good, and St. Louis, Cleveland, New York and the others are as good, if not better, than in 1916. It will be a tough job to get back into the running, and all I can do now is hope. I am hoping that we may get away to a good start and that my pitchers are in shape. The other players are in good condition and will show up well."

LAST year we won only 37 games and lost 117. That's a discouraging record, but I can say positively that we will not be so bad this season. I have been building up a team, and right now I believe I have a pretty fair start."

How Connie Built His Team

CONNIE has a bunch of promising pitchers on the club and there is no doubt that he will unearth a few who will rival big league ball. With Joe Bush and Elmer Myers to steady them down, the others should come to the front rapidly. At present Ellis Johnson looks best of all of the rookies. He seems to have everything and his work is satisfactory to Mack. Naylor, the Oklahoma product, also has the earmarks of a comer, and under Connie's course of training will be a valuable asset to the club. Lefty Anderson is good; Jing Johnson, Rubt Schauer and Moyes are improving daily, and Siebold, Keele, Hill, Nabors, Smith, Adams and Parham are still in the running. In all, it can be seen that Manager Mack has thirteen pitchers to work on and there certainly are some good ones in the bunch.

The club is the result of two years of hard work. Connie sent his scouts to every baseball town in the United States and Canada, and passed up South America, Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia because baseball was not played on those continents. Hundreds of players were tried out and only a few were retained. A steady stream of recruits flowed into Shibe Park, but none seemed to fill the bill. Connie's scouts combed the brush and grabbed everything that looked at all promising. No player was overlooked and no expense was spared. Instead of adopting his usual conservative policy, Mack spent money with a lavish hand when it came to signing new talent. Ping Bodie, discarded by the White Sox in 1914, was rediscovered on the Pacific coast and shipped eastward for another trial under the big tent. Frank Thrasher, who demolished a few fences in Atlanta, also was captured, and this pair, with Amos Strunk, forms one of the hardest hitting outfits the Athletics ever had. Bates, the new third baseman, also was trapped in Vernon, Cal., and Grover was lifted from Butte, Mont. These are the new men in the outfield and infield. As soon as they begin playing together and show signs of team work some first-class baseball will be shown.

THE one thing shown by the Mackmen thus far is an ability to hit the ball. In the practice games base hits have been quite common, but runs have been scarce. This is due to the fact that right inside baseball has not yet been attempted, and will not be tried until Connie has a line on the style of game the men are adapted for. Before the Atlanta series is over there will be a shift in the batting order and smoother team play will result.

Ping Bodie Showing Wonderful Form

PING BODIE looks like the star of the team. He is convinced that Jimmy Callahan was grossly mistaken when he turned him loose and now is anxious to prove it. No one works harder than Ping. According to reports from the South, he always is the first man out and never is idle for a moment. When not playing in the outfield he works out in one of the infield positions, and shows class wherever he is. At first base he looks like a regular player and handles himself like a veteran. When Bodie played with the White Sox he could slam the ball, but was too slow on the bases. He weighed more than 200 pounds and found it cumbersome to carry so much weight. When he reported to the training camp in Jacksonville Ping weighed 184, was faster than ever before and surprised even Connie Mack. Bodie will break up many ball games this year with his lusty swats and he also will cover the ground in left field. He is a finished ball player and looks the part.

Frank Thrasher cannot be handed a medal for his fielding, as there is lots of room for improvement, but his batting will carry him through. In the early games he did not register many hits, but that was due to the fact that he is using a heavy bat. In the early part of the season the players usually use a lighter bat, but it is much easier to pull around. After a month or so, when the arms get into shape, the heavier bludgeons are used. Thrasher believes that he will be able to do better work if he sticks to his regular bat and grows accustomed to it. In this regard he has allowed him to have his own way.

Stuffy McInnis, the greatest first baseman of all time, is in wonderful shape and is hitting better than at this time last year. He steadies the infield considerably and virtually directs the defense of the club. At second, Lawry and Grover are fighting it out, with the edge at present in favor of the former. Connie thinks both of Lawry, and while he will not admit it, many believe that he is of the opinion that the Maine collegian will develop into another Eddie Collins. Lawry is very fast and gets ground balls that look like singles. He is throwing better and his hitting has improved. Grover, too, is a first-class man and looks a natural star. It will be hard to select between them. Bates at third is very fast and has a good arm. That seems to be enough for a man to fill Baker's shoes.

THE Athletics are capable of playing good baseball. Down in Miami, Fla., against the Braves, the team did not look so well in the first game, but in the second, which was lost by a close score, it looked as good, if not better, than Stallings' aggregation. In the third game, which was won by the Mackies, the team looked like a pennant-winning organization. In Jacksonville there was no opposition, but at Albany, Ga., against Indianapolis, the club was in top form.

Young Electrician Gave Fans Shock

THE musty past a young electrician climbed through the ropes in Kansas City, with a bathrobe fluttering around his shoulders and a pair of gloves laced with mitts. It was his debut to the boxing world. He did not knock the enemy of the building, even though his opponent was none other than Saller Grande. On the contrary, he was hit in the eye. He was poked in the nose. He was hit on the ear. His jaw, too, received its fair share of the shower of flattery for which he was the target. It seemed to him like the other hours of his life when he was the sparring partner of Jim Flynn, the Pueblo fireman. He enjoyed greatly closing both the young electrician's eyes at teatime. But the youthful current-plumber was not dismayed. He sought other means of defense. He was hit and got them from time to time. The fans called him a "punching bag."

ONE NIGHT an old-time fan pointed a finger at the poor but honest boxer. "Look my words," said the O. T. F., "that heavy will make trouble for the boxer before long. He has got the goods. He will surprise everybody pretty soon."

When these sagacious remarks, it is interesting to watch the climb of the boxer. He went to New York and got a few alleged fights around the city without getting anything on fire.

ROWERS PREPARE FOR THE SEASON

Schuylkill Navy Rowers Getting Ready for Eleven Events This Year

KELLY IS IN TRAINING

The advent of spring has brought with it the active training season among the Schuylkill navy rowers. In the twelve clubhouses clustered above Fairmount Dam on the East River Drive all is bustle and bustle. Racing paraphernalia has been scraped and varnished and put in prime condition. Rowing rigs have been repaired from their accumulation of winter dust. The cheery call of the coxswains urging the crews as they glide upon the bosom of old Schuylkill being rowed by the local knights of the ash-blade have started their spring work.

The Schuylkill Navy Board, the captains and coaches, have mapped out a big program for the season, and they are hoping that the grim specter of war will not interfere with their plans. The regatta season is a lengthy one, beginning with the American Henley on the Schuylkill May 12 and ending with the New England Association regatta, October 12, giving the oarsmen plenty of opportunity to show their skill with the scull and sweep both at home and abroad.

The Dates
The full schedule of the season's regattas follows:
American Henley, Schuylkill River, May 12.
New York Rowing Association, May 20.
Schuylkill River regatta, June 10.
Hudson River regatta, June 24.
Northwesterns regatta, June 24.
New York Rowing Association, Duluth, July 15.
New York Rowing Association, Boston, July 4.
People's regatta, Schuylkill River, July 4.
People's Association, Bayonne, August 11.
National regatta, Lynn, Mass., July 27 and 28.
Middle States regatta, place not decided, Labor Day.
New England Association, Boston, October 12.

The clubs have been well recruited during the winter months, and the captains who will lead the clubs during the year have all been selected. With the exception of the Malta and Pennsylvania Clubs all others re-elected their leaders of last year. The latter has replaced Sidney Molloy at the Pennsylvania Barge Club, and William Hammill has taken the job of Lewis Kenney at the Malta Club.

George Melloy, of the Undine Club, after four years of service as commodore of the Schuylkill Navy, has resigned, and J. Elliott Newlin, of the Philadelphia Barge Club, now heads the rowing organization. Carl E. Bunth, who had such success with the Undine men last season, again will tutor the wearers of the Blue and Yellow, while Jim Dempsey will continue the University Barge cohorts, and Joe Dempsey the aspirants of the Philadelphia Barge Club.

Newlin is Commodore
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The local oarsmen will cross blades with the New York and Boston clubs in the special races at city regattas.
John Kelly, of Vesper fame, already has started training for the season's single sculling events. He is in fine condition, having played basketball with the West Branch Y. M. C. A. all winter. Kelly will continue his work this season entirely to single sculling, with the idea of displacing Thomas J. Rooney as the national single sculling champion when the national regatta is rowed in Lynn, Mass., next July.

NORTHEAST BOYS LEAVE ON HIKE TO NEW YORK

One Hundred Local Schoolboys Start Third Annual Walk to the Metropolis

One hundred students of the Northeast High School, members of the Walking Club, left this morning at 7 o'clock on their third annual hike to New York city. Oscar E. Guernsey, physical director, and Anthony Roselle are in charge of the boys.

The members had sent their Sunday togs to New York city and were attired in old trousers, sweaters and caps. They hoped to reach Trenton this evening, and Doctor Parker, another member of the school faculty who is making the trip, will address the boys on "My Experience at Plattsburg Military Camp."

The club will leave Trenton Tuesday morning in order to reach New Brunswick in the evening, where Guernsey will speak. His topic will be, "Physical Training for Boys as the Embryo of Preparedness."

Wednesday afternoon and evening and Thursday will be spent in seeing the sights of New York. The club will leave New York at 10:30 p. m. Thursday for Philadelphia. The expense for each boy is \$8.50.

FORDHAM TRACK TEAM HAS TWO PHILADELPHIA DATES

NEW YORK, April 2.—The outdoor schedule of the Fordham University track team has been announced as follows:
April 28, Penn relay carnival, at Philadelphia; May 15, dual meet with Stevens, at Hoboken; 18, dual meet with City College, at Lewinshon Stadium; 28, intercollegiate, at Philadelphia; June 2, New York A. C. games, at Travers Island; 14, interclass games, at Fordham.

SCORES FROM THE SOUTH
New York Giants 5; Detroit, 6.
Cleveland 1; Pittsburgh, 1 (A. O. Called in sixth; rain).
St. Louis (N.), 1; St. Louis (A.), 0.
Boston Red Sox-Brooklyn (rain).
Shreveport, 1; New York Giants seconds, 0.

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ENTRIES WANTED FOR AMATEUR BOXING TOURNAMENT—100, 110, 125, 135 and 145 pound classes. In Atlantic City every Thursday night under the auspices of the Amateur Athletic Association. Transportation and expenses covered. Valuable prizes. Entries can be had and particulars furnished by Mr. J. J. McLaughlin, secretary, 1514 S. Market St., Philadelphia.

WHEN A FELLER NEEDS A FRIEND



SCHEDULE OF CRICKET DATES FOR PHILADELPHIA AND HALIFAX CUPS

HALIFAX CUP
May 26—Germantown vs. Philadelphia at Manheim.
May 28—Germantown vs. Frankford at Haverford.
May 30—Germantown vs. Frankford at Manheim.
June 2—Germantown vs. Merion at Manheim.
June 4—Germantown vs. Merion at New York.
June 6—Frankford vs. Merion at New York.
June 8—Merion vs. Philadelphia at Haverford.
June 10—Merion vs. Germantown at Haverford.
June 12—Merion vs. Frankford at Manheim.
June 14—Merion vs. Frankford at Manheim.
June 16—Merion vs. Frankford at Manheim.
June 18—Merion vs. Frankford at Manheim.
June 20—Merion vs. Frankford at Manheim.
June 22—Merion vs. Frankford at Manheim.
June 24—Merion vs. Frankford at Manheim.
June 26—Merion vs. Frankford at Manheim.
June 28—Merion vs. Frankford at Manheim.
June 30—Merion vs. Frankford at Manheim.

ST. LOUIS SOCCER TEAM TO PLAY THE DISSTONS

Western Eleven Will Tour East, and Has Three Games Booked So Far

The St. Louis soccer team will play Disston next Monday afternoon at Diston Park. St. Louis defeated Bethlehem when the National and American Cup champions toured the West during the Yuletide holidays.

The schedule so far arranged for the westerners gives them three games. Starting next Saturday at Bethlehem, Pa., St. Louis will tackle the national champions on the new athletic field recently donated to the Bethlehem Athletic Association. On Sunday they will tackle the Scotch-American team at Newark, N. J., and on Monday they will come here to meet Disstons.

NORRIS WILLIAMS WINS IN TWO TENNIS FINALS

BOSTON, April 2.—Richard Norris Williams, 2d, the national champion, won the single final in the invitation tennis tournament on the covered courts of the Longwood Cricket Club, and paired with George W. Wightman, of this city, captured the honors in the doubles round robin.

Williams defeated Nathaniel W. Niles, of this city, the scores being 6-3, 6-2. Williams and Wightman defeated Niles and Count Otto Salm, of New York, in the doubles, 6-3, 6-2.

Ray and Loomis Win Three Races Each

CHICAGO, April 2.—The Chicago Athletic Association won the senior indoor track and field championship of the Central A. A. U. here with a total of 48 points. Joe Ray and Jo Loomis shared the individual honors. Each won three events.

YOUR UNCLE SAM'L MIGHT BE SHY ON THE BATTING EYE, FAT, SOFT OR CLUMSY, BUT HE'S THERE ALL O. K.

One Peek at the Records Will Show U. S. Veteran Has Never Been Counted Out—Army of John Flanagans Would Help

By GRANTLAND RICE
Lines to Our Uncle Samuel
He may be ponderous, thick and slow,
And somewhat heavy upon his feet;
He may not know where he wants to go
When they push him out on a sudden beat;
But, once stirred up by the rolling drums
And crowded into the smashing game,
When the time is due and the showdown comes
He usually gets there just the same.
He may be soft, and he may be fat;
He may be shy on the batting eye;
He may not cheer as he comes out,
And swings away with a half-baked try;
But, once tossed into the seething mias,
And the time arrives for a steady aim,
He may be clumsy and ponderous,
But the Old Boy gets there just the same.

IT IS still a question as to which would make the best grenade thrower—a ball player, a shot putter or a hammer tosser. A grenade weighs about five pounds—a weight somewhat too bulky to permit of the ball player's snap throw. It might be better to round up the John Flanagans and the Matt McGraths rather than the Walter Johnsons and Alexanders.

Cleveland and Joe Wood
There is small wonder extant over Cleveland's interest in the pitching condition of Smoke-Ball Joe Wood.

Another Entry List
Six—We might not have any great grenade throwers in this country, but we should be fixed for pegging over the heavy bombs if our leading ball tossers are ever lugged into action. In this respect we should be ready 3,000,000 strong, and that is a conservative estimate. PEDRO, THE DOC.

Concerning April Showers
They may be great for the flowered pots,
But they're roughneck on the moshie shots.
Detroit and Pitchers
We observe one critic's remark that Hughes Jennings could have won a pennant last season with any other pitching staff in the major league.

With the exception of Connie Mack's erratic staff, this is probably true. And the tough part of it is that just at present there is no certainty that Hughes' staff will be greatly improved. He has prospects, but prospects pop up in the spring much after the manner of morning glories, only to fade under the first hot sun. In Harry Coveleskie the Tigers have a star. But outside of the left-winger, Pole no one can point to another pitcher on the squad as a first-class product. Daus should be, but so far has never reached the expected height. One or two of his youngsters look very good, but weak pitching staff tossed in against Ruth, Shore, Leonard and Mays, or Shawkey, Caldwell, Cullip, Fisher, etc., puts the rest of the Tiger machine under an abnormal handicap.

The Tiger attacks last year averaged an extra run to the game over the Red Sox. This daily margin against all competition should have been overwhelming. But where

the Tigers were making five runs and losing, the Red Sox were making three runs and winning. You can figure from these sordid details just how much pitching counts.

The Proper Move
A few days ago a certain ten per cent hole at Druid Hills, and then proceeded to slice his second 100 yards off line into a cornfield.

He came up to George Adair later for advice. "What should I have done under those conditions?" he asked Mr. Adair.

"Just what you did do," eagerly countered the expert.

"I lost my ball," replied the duffer.

"You did exactly right," said George. "That's what a man who slices 150 yards off the course should do every time."

"Are there any bald-headed ball players now in the major leagues?" queries R. R. F. None, of the glistering domed variety, but no one would ever accuse Dick Rudolph of having a matted covering upon his well known and justly celebrated crest.

The last bewhiskered athlete we ever saw play was Tacks Parrot, in 1901. Tacks completed that campaign with a heavy beard and a batting average of .307. But the great yelp which went out for speed and youth sent the bewhiskered entries on a rush to the barber. Not that whiskers are a handicap to speed, but they have never been accused of producing an extensively useful appearance.

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