ATHLETICS FAILED TO BUNCH THEIR HITS, BUT THEY EASILY BUNCHED THEIR ERRORS

TRST-BASE HOODOO STILL PURSUES TITSBURGH; DREYFUSS SELECTS FRED MERKLE TO BATTLE WITH JINX

Nineteen Players Have Failed to Make Good Since Kitty Bransfield Left the Team Twelve Years Ago-His Shoes Cannot Be Filled

THERE are many strange tales connected with baseball, but the yarn of the noke-tainted, sooty hoodoo that roosts on first base in Forbes Field, Pittsrgh, is one of the strangest in the modern history of the game. This jinx has on the job for the last twelve years, and from last reports is just as healthy d active as ever. The story of the Pirates' adventures in search of a regular Ig league person to guard the sack in regular big league style was brought to our ice when we learned that Barney Dreyfuss still was sweeping the horizon with powerful binoculars and had selected Fred Merkle, the founder of the concrete gue and at present an employe of the Brooklyn club, to try his hand at playing the initial cushion. Fred has been an unfortunate player and caused lots of trouble for himself and others through one terrible mistake, made early in life: He forgot o touch second one day, and from then on was unanimously elected charter memer of the bonehead league. Merkle has made up for his error, but it looks as if were wishing himself more hard luck by accepting the job at Pittsburgh. It is not known whether the deal will go through, but with Barney on the job with his well upholstered bankroll it's a cinch that he will do a cash business with Charlie obets or be forcibly ejected from the office of the Squire of Flatbush. The puire has Jake Daubert to play first base, so why carry another expensive player n these hard times? Barney is likely to gain his point-and Merkle-and another chapter will be written around that aforementioned hoodoo which roosts on the creat of the well-known first station in Forbes Field.

The hoodoo, or linx-any old name will do-laid off the Pirates until the spring of 1905, when Dreyfuss pulled a "boner" and shipped Kitty Bransfield to Philadelphia in exchange for Del Howard, who was regarded as a comer, and Paul Kreuger. It was believed at that time that Howard would develop into one of the same's greatest stars; but he fell short. This was indeed a sorry trade, for Bransseld was considered the best first baseman in the business, and continued to play his position with the Phils as only an expert could. Del Howard started in to play first, but his work was sad. Before the season was over Fred Clarke found it ecessary to try out two others, Homer Hildebrand and Bill Clancey, but these too, failed to show any class.

TN THE twelve seasons since Kitty Bransfield bade farewell to the City of Smoke no less than nineteen players have been used as first basemen by the Pirates. Will Fred Merkle be No. 20?

Long List of Candidates, but None Made Good

FTER Del Howard and his successors flivved, the job was wished on Joe Nealon. A Joe stuck around for the season of 1906 and was considered a regular-something strange and unusual. He played in most of the games and established a record which wasn't broken until 1912, when Jack Miller was shifted from second However, Nealon came back the next year, but fell by the wayside. Al Storke and Harry Swacina stepped in and received a tryout and Nealon got the hook. In 1908 Swacina and Storke again took a fling at it and were assisted by Warren Gill and Jim Kane. This quartet made such a hit that Barney gave all of them the gate, and in 1909 inflicted the hoodoo position on poor old Bill Abstein Old Bill helped make the team a pennant winner and shared in the world series spoils, but that ended his usefulness. The next year Jack Flynn was inserted. but he had some real opposition. Ham Hyatt and Bud Sharpe were contenders but none set the world aftre. It seemed impossible to find one big enough to fill Bransfield's shoes and Dreyfuss was beginning to realize that Kitty was worth more to the club than he ever before had dreamed. Fred Hunter was made welcome in 1911, but he also failed to make an impressive showing. When the season was almost half over Bill McKechnie took up the burden and showed up so well that he, too, received the tinware.

Then came 1912, which brought to Fred Clarke a regular idea. Jack Miller, who had been cavorting around second base, was sent to the fatal bag, but he startled the natives by lasting two seasons. He was a regular in 1912 and 1913, establishing a record which still stands. But Barney was not satisfied, and when 1914 rolled around Miller was shunted off to St. Louis in a trade which brought Big Ed Konetchy to Pittsburgh to swell the growing ranks of the flivving first semen. Koney fielded well, but his hitting was very much to the bad. He was about to be chased off the lot when he crossed every one by signing with the Feds. Doc Johnston was next on the list and played in 1915, but he slowed up so much that Bill Hinchman and Hans Wagner were used last year.

HONUS was slated for the job this year and would be playing now had he come to terms with Dreyfuss. He looked like a regular person for the job and no doubt could have put up a good game despite his age. That left Bill Hinchman to sit in, and Bill will go over the hills and far, far away as soon as another guy can be procured. If Merkle gets the job he has our sympathy. We hope he isn't superstitious or finds Kitty's shoes

Joe Bush Is Regular Hard-Luck Pitcher

JOE BUSH has qualified as the hard-luck pitcher of the American League. In the last week he has twirled two beautiful ball games, allowed but five hits each time-and was decisively beaten. He was stacked up against Walter Johnson on the first day and yesterday Ernie Shore was his opponent. He twirled rings around the Red Sox hurler, but it was on the cards that be should lose-and his sammates saw to it that the cards were correct. Five miserable muffs, which is slang for a flock of foozles, ruined every chance he had and prevented him from making a try for a no-hit game. For five innings Bullet Joe had Barry's Barriers swinging like the old barn door, and kept it up in the sixth until he saw it was no use. In that inning Barry's easy grounder, which should have been a certain putout, was booted by Lawry, and Hoblitzel, the next man up, rolled such a polite and gentle bounder to Bates that Ray did a juggling act instead of throwing the ball to Stuffy McInnis. Both of these batters should have been thrown out, and as the next man fanned, the side, according to Hoyle, should have been retired and Bush's hitless game saved. But Bullet Joe saw that it was no use and grooved a couple and the bombardment started. From then on the Sox gathered five hits, which were more effective than the eight swats garnered by the Athletics. Barry's men knew what to do with the bingles after they got them, proving that an exrienced team will put it all over an inexperienced one at all stages of the game. It was a shame to lose that combat yesterday; but it was lost, and that settles it. The men of Mack looked good despite the bum fielding, and, as we have said before, as soon as the team work improves, better baseball will be seen.

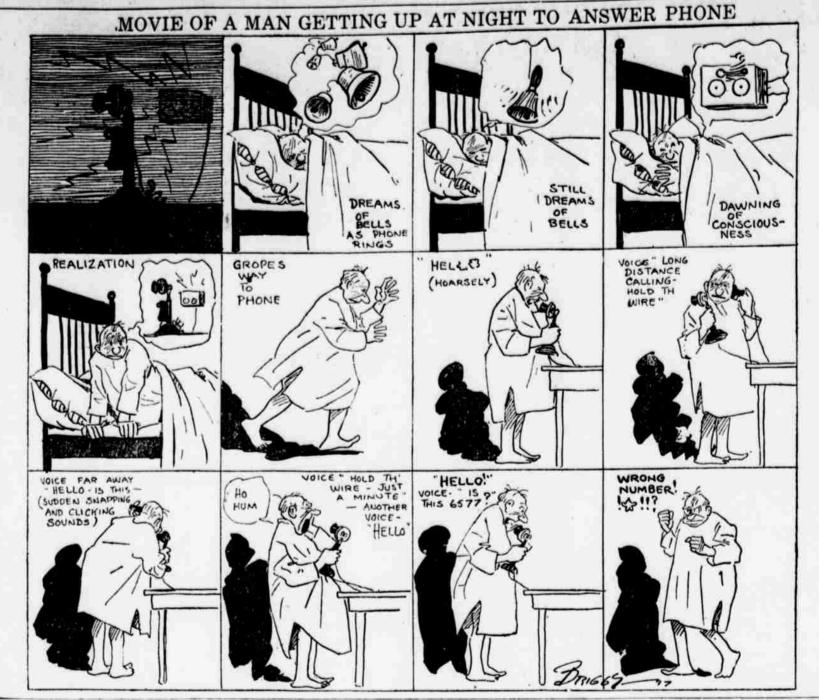
CONNIE'S pitchers are not in the best of shape. The cold weather has put them on the sidelines and it will take a few hot days to thaw them out. Elmer Myers is clogged up with a cold, Nabors is just as bad as ever and the rookies are complaining of numerous and sundry allments. Jing Johnson seems to be in shape to pitch a few innings and Ellis Johnson showed some promise in the first game against Boston, but the others cannot be depended upon-yet.

Two-Day Golf Tourneys Gain in Favor

TWO-DAY golf tournaments to take place on the first two days of the week are raining much favor in Philadelphia, and it is expected that some will be carded this year, by the various clubs, most of which have not yet completed their fules for the coming season. It is felt that the average golf tournament astes at least half a day, and that by a little efficiency the first and second inds of match play might just as well be run off on the first day of the tournaent, with the semifinals and finals the following day. This plan eliminates the difying round, which is felt to be antiquated so far as small tournaments are ed. It is felt also that the first two days of the week are much better than us practice of holding the tourneys on the last three days of the week, nich the average business man can ill afford to spare at that time of the There is very little uniformity in the present method of conducting the tournaments. The usual method is to have a long, lingering qualifynd which will last over the whole day, sometimes from dawn to sunset, the being allowed to pick their own time. This means that four rounds of we to be gone through with on Friday and Saturday. Another plan the qualifying round in the morning, the first round of match play in n and the finals on Saturday over thirty-six holes. The plan is to men's" tournaments of two days where the entrants are grouped rding to their handicaps. By this scheme all the muss of the uld be done away with and the length of play reduced by a ag rounds would be done away with and the length of play reduced by a my It would insure every man having a fling at the tournament and not reportiously eliminated from the competition because he happened to have day at the bat in the metal play.

cheme is said to have the hearty indorsement of Howard W. Perrin. nt of the United States Golf Association. President Perrin has all to the effect that he believes the two-day tourneys at the of the week are an improvement not only for the convenience of time to the business man, but also because they leave the business at the end of the week when there is desire

of the Dodgers, says a ten per cent Government tax would



NORTHWESTERN IS **BOWLING CHAMPION**

Defeats Adelphi in Roll-Off for Artisan League, Section A, Title

Section A, of the Artisan Bowling League, following a roll-off with Adelphia. The teams were deadlocked at the close of the regular schedule, and the odd game of a post-season series gave the title to the Northwestern. Northwestern easily won the and came through in the deciding match by u slight margin of 9 ping. Underdown was the best pin toppler for

the season, keeling over 50,918, for an average of 848 per game. This team also knocked down the most pins in any single game, 989, while Adelphi scattered the most pins for three games, 2714.

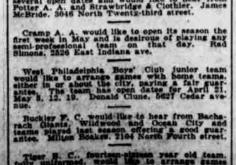
President Joe Avil. of Undercown, was the leading individual player. He scored 8905 pins, for an average of 178 for 56 games. Bob Hartley, of Pennsylvania, annexed the balance of individual records-high single, 254, and high three, 650.

Northwest'n 39 21 650 Progressive, 30 4067 Adelphi 39 21 650 Underdown, 28 32 406 shouldered, bull-necked, thick-wristed citi-Averages and records:

SECTION A

Games Pins Av'ge Single Three

Underdown 60 Northwestern 60 Adelphi 60 Pennsylvania 60 Progressive 60 Germantown 60	50918 50782 50134 49104 48854 44351	848 846 883 818 780 789	989 932 945 939 911 855	2688 2687 2714 2686 2537 2382	3
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AMATEUR	BASE				



THE CASE OF J. FRANKLIN BAKER GLITTERING EXAMPLE OF HOODOO THAT HAS TRAILED THE YANKEES

Trappe Mauler, Known as the Unbreakable, Injured Often in the Last Two Seasons

By GRANTLAND RICE

THERE is no such thing in life as a hoodoo. Certainly not. You can put it down at 100 per cent bunk.

And yet-well, where are you going to classify the New York Yanks? The Yanks for more than a decade have been cursed by misfortune-by the rawest type of luck. "This," you will say, "was more incom-petence than ill luck." Perhaps it was— before the new owners took charge.

But while every other detail of their working order has shifted, Fate hasn't, as the records will show

A Glittering Example

A glittering example of Yankee hoodoolsm zen of far more than average stamina and

olidity.

If you figure him as any frail creature, merely consider his record with Connie Mack's Athletics:

1909-148 games 1910—147 games.

1911-148 games 1912-149 games

1913-149 games. 1914-150 games.

Here is a six-year record for consistency.

In the course of six years Baker missed less than a week out of the entire campaign —and most of this was due to the two or three days he took away from work at the end of a season to rest up for the world series. He was always one of those rugged citizens who never was sick and rarely in-

Whereupon

Whereupon, after a season's rest on the farm, John Franklin Baker joins the Yanks. You know the answer already. Just as the Yanks were upon the verge last summer the Yanks were upon the verge last summer the Yanks were upon the verge last summer the year. of going out to grab a pennant, Baker among others, became a total loss. For the first time in his career he was out of the game for more than two weeks. He was out six weeks just at the vital point of the Frank's thumb, while still a bit sore, did

not prevent him from getting back into the line-up. Manager Donovan put him in the with the Senators yesterday.

Of course, there is no such thing as codoo. Certainly not. But what's th

Another Instance

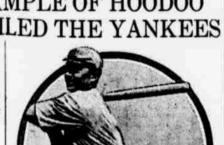
A few days ago we had a long talk with Napoleon Lajole, the eminent French Bat-ting Eye, about the untrammeled ill fortune that always followed Cleveland.

"There never has been anything in base-ball like it." he said, "and it has lasted for more than fifteen years. There may be no such a thing as Hoodoo—but, what-ever it is, it certainly gets on your nerves when you see star players burt year after

There was the case of Joe Birmingham The Cleveland Club had been battered and broke by Fate for three straight years. In this particular campaign it had lost eight regulars in less than two weeks.

Finally, Joe Birmingham was signed. A loud, lusty cheer went up. Not because Birmingham had any great record as a player, but because it was known that he had played halfback at Cornell for two





HOODOOED WITH YANKS

During J. Franklin Baker's six years with the Mackmen he seldom

was absent, but finds it difficult to

avoid injury with Donovan's crew.

years without having as much as a second's

He was known as the Human Unbreak

was more important in Cleveland then than

The club was replete with talent that could bat .300—Lajoie, Flick, Bradley, Bay, Rossman, Clarke, Bemis, etc.

But it had no ball player who lasted month outside of the hospital. Birming-

ham entered the city one morning. The next afternoon the football veteran lunged at a sharp curve, twisted a ligament in

his back and was out more than three

Of course, there is no such thing as a loodoo. But what's the bally answer?"

The time is coming, apparently, when it will be easier to get recruits for the first

ine trenches than it will be to get recruite for the Yanks. The average span of wounded in the first is only two out of five.

Get the right line for the ball Hit it hard enough—that's all.

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No metal could touch him. This

time taken out for injuriés

a .300 average.

How to Putt

Sothoron, Russell and Schupp, All Kids, Show Up Veterans

Young pitchers promise to cut a big igure in the two major league championship

YOUNG PITCHERS

The spectacle of Allen Sothoron, a Brownie speculation, holding the Indians to a single bingle; Al Russell, of the Yankees. downing the mighty Johnson, and Ferdie Schupp, youthful Giant, acting as the balance wheel of that collection of ball players is enough to make the veteran hurler grab a

gun and go to war. Besides the stated trio of flingers, several other youths are being harbored by big-league clubs who are likely to step out and burn some of the fur off batting averages most any time.

Howard Ehmke, of the Tigers, although

he lost a ball game yesterday, is far from being the worst pitcher in the American League, and Lee Fohl, Cleveland boss, has an unmustached brigade of pitchers that already has proved where it stands. Connie Mack is putting lots of faith in

MOVE TO MERGE CAGE LEAGUES

Eastern Moguls Will Endeavor to Form National **Basketball Commission**

PRES. SCHEFFER'S IDEA

The Eastern Basketball League held a meeting last evening at the Bingham at which constructive plans were launched for a consolidation of all the professional basketball leagues in the East. It is one of the ketball leagues in the East. It is one of the best moves ever made by the cage moguis and the object sought is to form a working basis of all the cage organizations. A motion was made which President Scheffer will get into communication with the heads of the Intercounty, Interstate and Pennsylvania State Leagues for a general gathering, at which the question will be thoroughly aired. President Scheffer, himself, is sponsor for the movement which is really the formation of a national basketball commission. He says it is the only way in which the integrity of the sport can be preserved and prevent the disbandment of leagues. the integrity of the sport can be preserve and prevent the disbandment of leagues.

The general tone of the discussion was that the salaries of the players at present are too high and they must be reduced. Several managers reported they had al. Several managers reported they had al-ready talked the matter over with the players and they are willing to work for reduced salaries. All the Eastern League clubs lost considerable money last season and the magnates are after some scheme whereby the game can be placed on a more whereby the game can be placed on a

Motion for Rule

Motion for Rule

The subject of adopting the three professional and two amateur rule was advanced by Reading, and Charles Schwarts of that club, presented the following motion:

"That each club of this league cannot play more than three professional players in an Eastern League game or sign more than four professional players. By professional players is meant one who has participated in six or more full games in the Eastern. Pennsylvania, New York State or Connecticut State League or any other league playing professional ball. All other or amateur players signed up to limit allowed by this league to receive not more than the state of lowed by this league to receive not more than \$5 per game, no expenses to be althan \$5 per game, no expenses to be al-lowed amateur players except the trans-portation and hotel expenses when playing on a foreign floor. After an amateur ha-participated in forty Eastern League games he becomes a professional."

The prevailing sentiment is to retain the five professionals, as it is argued you get better basketball from five out-and-out

better basketball from five out-and-out professionals, if five such men can be secured at reasonable figures, because the public STAR IN MAJORS in this section have been educated to a five-man professional club. Mr. Bailey, of the Greys, says, "you can't get good ball out of amateurs and it is not in the wood."

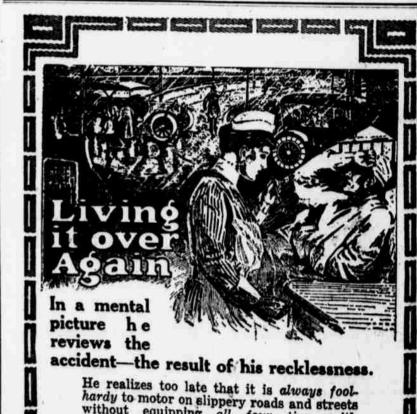
Commission's Good Move

The merging of all basketball leagues is the best scheme ever attempted. Under the movement, if adopted, the players would be restricted to one league only. The ques-tion of men performing in two and three organizations is the greatest evil in the sport, and when the leagues enter into as agreement, there will be no jumping around and a team will receive a player's best services. When a club in any league wants to dispose of a player, the president will send a waiver notice out to all the clubs in the other organizations, and if they wish

his services, he can be purchased at the waiver price, otherwise he is a free agent. The subject of changing the method of tossing fouls was discussed informally, and many argued that the rule of the player committing the foul try for the throw, a fine thing.

POOR BAT NELSON! WELSH COULD HAVE STOPPED HIM

ST. LOUIS, April 18 .- Battling Nelson is through. The former lightweight champion of the world went twelve rounds with Freddie Welsh, the titleholder, here last night Elmer Myers, Seibold, Ellis and Jing John- ply toyed with the once durable Dane. Had son, mere lads. Claude Williams has won he so desired Welsh could have ended it his spurs with the White Sox. almost any time after the first few rounds.



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they have no prudence.

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