

Magazine Feature Section

CUT OUT THE SOUTHERN TRAINING CAMPS SAY THE BASEBALL MAGNATES

More than ever the futility of spending thousands of dollars in training camps where the weather always is more or less problematical has been brought home to major league managers and owners since the announcement by Charles Comiskey that he will abandon the annual tour of the White Sox to California next season.

Indeed, some of the managers now are asseverating that they can train their teams at home and benefit fully as much as they do in some seasons in the south.

This refers to the seasons that are called "unseasonable" by the native southerners but to their sorrow some managers have found that the "unseasonable" spring in some parts of the south is the rule rather than the exception.

Incidentally it has been brought home to the owners during the past few seasons that there is not as much money in these southern training trips as there was once when major league baseball was more or less of a novelty to the southern fans who during a regular season of play never saw anything better than the Southern league brand of baseball.

The common statement now is that major league teams can't draw files in the south.

Even the glamour of the New York Giants has palled upon the southern public and McGraw with possibly the best drawing card in the major leagues has not made a money-maker of his last several trips to the south.

NOT ENOUGH WORK.

But while the money side of the equation carries its weight with the owners particularly the thing that has soured some managers upon the southern trip is the fact that their teams do not get enough genuine work in the south to condition any kind of an athlete.

We have in mind one team that went to one of the flourishing cities of eastern Texas last year and in 30 days had precisely two days that were suited to real baseball practice.

There are some authorities who claim that a team could not condition itself indoors, but Branch Rickey, the manager of the St. Louis Browns has been credited with the statement that with just enough cross country work to get his ball players used to the feel of the earth he could put a team in condition north of the Mason and Dixon line as well as he could south of it.

As a matter of fact, the veteran players hardly ever do get into condition until the team comes south and the sun begins to boil them out. They may be said not to hit the top of their stride until early in May anyway and hence the spring training is regarded as a somewhat costly diversion by the owners insofar as their veterans are concerned.

NO GOOD FOR YOUNGSTERS.

Youngsters with more supple muscles and less stiff bones could condition themselves for a season's play in a now-storm and the trip to the south is superfluous for them also.

The cost of the southern training trip to the owner is large. While he does not pay salaries to his players until the curtain is raised upon the season he does pay railway fare for his men and in addition he must board them at some first-class hotel. Railway fare and hotel bills for some 30 or 40 athletes makes considerable of an item, and if it in reality is not accomplishing what it purposes to do the southern trip certainly may be regarded as an unnecessary institution.

south where enormous railway fares must be paid.

TO TRAIN AT HOME.

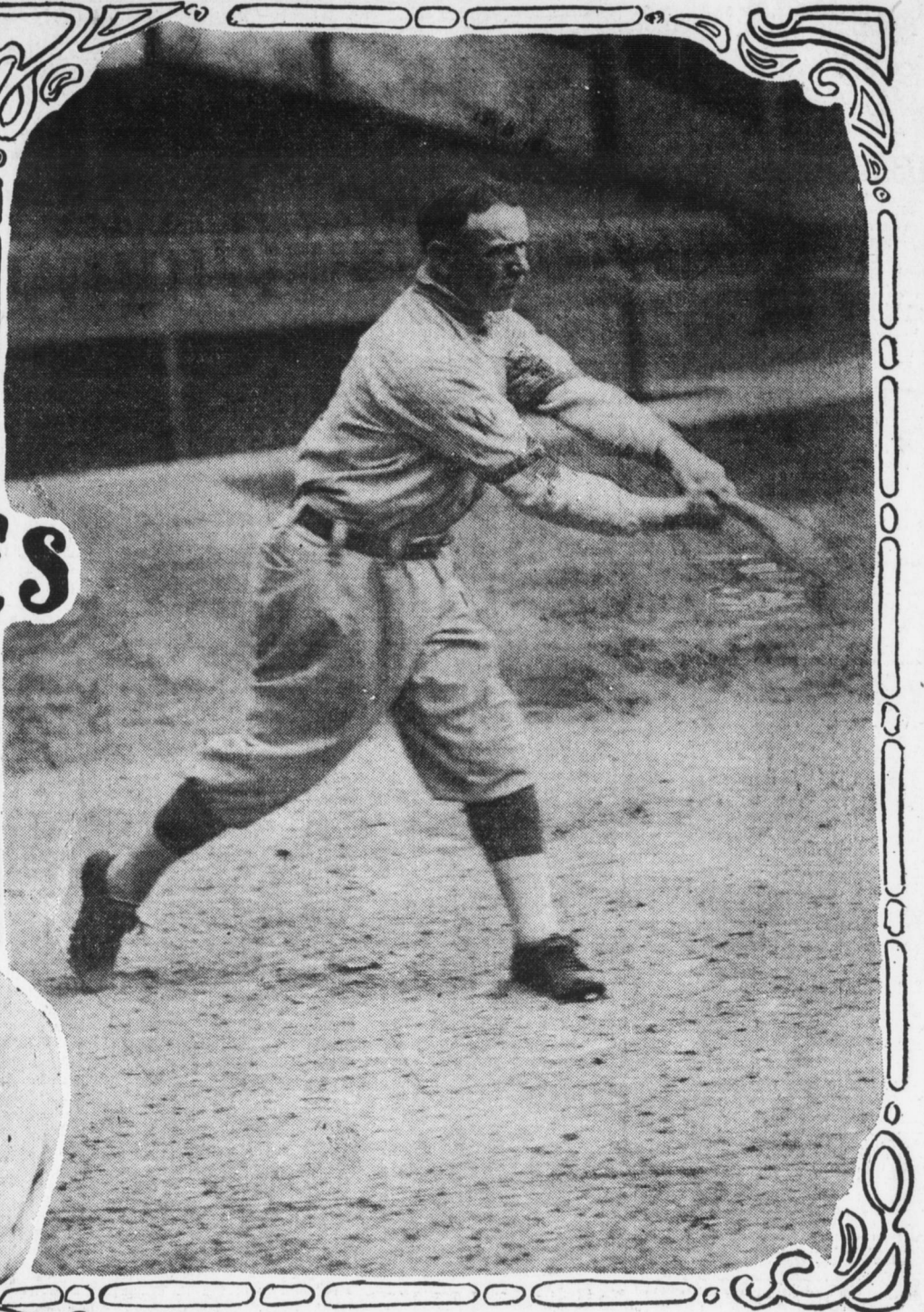
If the teams do not train at home there will be an effort on the part of major league managers to establish permanent camps in the south and perhaps build club-houses to house their own men in during the training season. The difficult part of this is to secure a town in which the climate may be definitely relied upon and this is a hard thing to do.



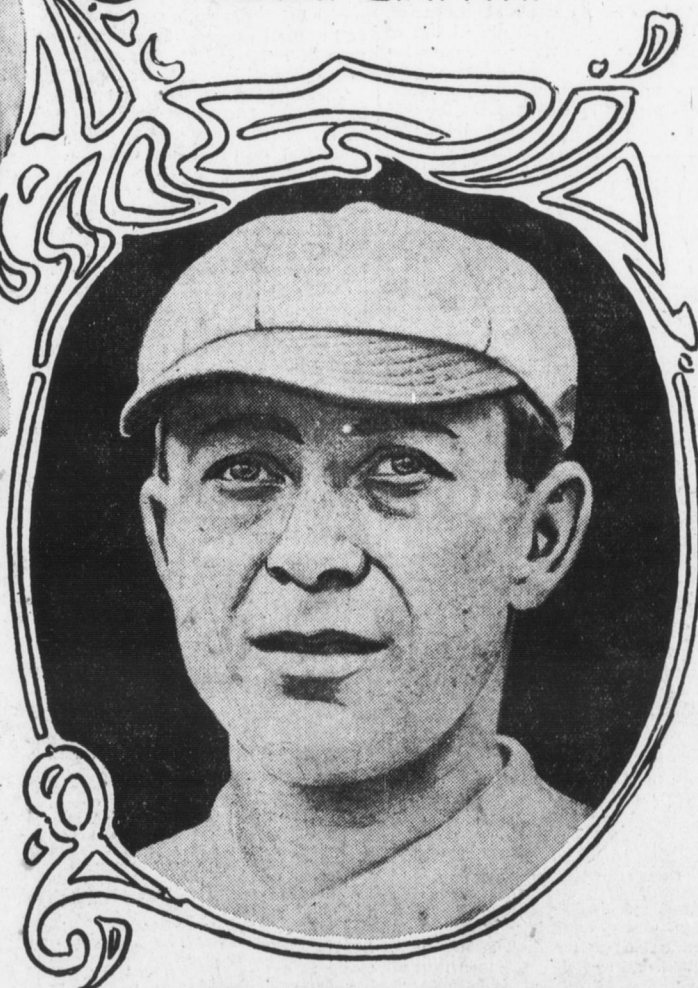
BRANCH RICKEY



BILL CARRIGAN



CLARK GRIFFITH



MILLER HUGGINS

Heretofore the owners have been able to pay some part of their bills through the gate receipts which they drew in the south, but with the baseball interest in Dixieland on the wane the "gate" in no wise approximates "the nut"—"nut" meaning the total expense of the trip.

It would not be surprising therefore if in another year or two most of the major league clubs took a chance upon conditioning themselves at home—both because they can get into actually better condition than in the south and because the expense of training at home is greatly less than in the

The west coast of Florida seems to be one of the best spots in the south from the standpoint of the number of days that work may be done or in which the weather is suitable to the "sweating out process."

St. Petersburg and Tampa are so highly thought of by the Philadelphia Nationals and the Chicago Cubs, respectively that they have taken what is tantamount to perpetual leases upon the training grounds in these two cities.

It is a nice commentary upon St. Petersburg that the Philadelphia Nationals jumped into the lead of the National league after returning from

there—it was their first season in Florida—and never were headed for the National league honors.

With the greater cost of running a team with each recurring season; the greater salaries and the higher cost of other necessary incidentals, the owners are glad to seize upon any chance to lessen the gross cost of promoting baseball.

One of the first slices is to come in the southern training trip. It will be the abandonment of the southern training trip.

Kites Aid Germans.

Most people are under the impression that the only aerial machines

being used today by the armies that are at war are aeroplanes and airships. As a matter of fact, ordinary balloons and kites are much to the fore, and it is recognized by all the great powers that their uses are invaluable.

During the last few years the Germans have recognized the advantages gained by the use of man-lifting kites, and a certain number of their soldiers have been trained to fly them both by day and by night. It is said that the passenger of a German war kite is supplied with a camera capable of taking photographs under almost any conditions.

It is declared that the Germans are photographing some of the positions of the allies with the assistance of pigeons. Herr Neubronner,

a German chemist, some time back invented a mechanical camera capable of taking instantaneous photographs which can be fitted to the breast of a pigeon by means of an elastic strap, leaving the wings entirely free. The camera weighs less than three ounces and is capable of reproducing objects when the bird is traveling at a velocity of twenty yards a second. At regular intervals a clock work arrangement opens the shutter of the camera.

But It Was True!

Former President Mellen of the New Haven likes railroad stories and was immensely pleased with one of the lesser officials the other day when he told him this one as being

not only true, but as an occurrence in the New Haven station.

A nervous lady stopped a baggage master and demanded to know why her train was arriving so late.

"Well," said he, "it's just like this: The train ahead is behind and this train was behind before besides."

The lady could not figure it and neither for a moment could President Mellen.

He Got \$5,000 Order.

"A cyclone is not such a bad thing after all," remarked the portly salesman as he settled himself comfortably in his chair. "One saved \$5 for me once."

"How did it happen?" asked a lounge.

"I was in a little town out in Kansas about two years ago and wanted to get to another small town 15 miles distant. There was no railroad between the two points, and I was standing in front of the livery stable arguing with the liveryman, who wanted \$5 to take me and my sample cases over, when a cyclone came along and, picking me up, landed me right in the little town to which I wanted to go."

"Eh—how about your sample cases?" faltered an awed listener.

"Oh," suavely replied the salesman, "the cyclone landed them just ahead of me and had my goods all spread out on display when I got there."

Ought to Have Life.

A lot of old-timers of the army and Navy Club in Washington were swapping stories.

"One Si Hankins," says a retired brigadier-general, "decided to enlist. He burned with a desire to serve his country. So he applied at a recruiting office and was duly punched and prodded, trotted up and down, jumped over chairs and tables and so forth."

"Then came the questions. All manner of them were fired at him, and he answered most of them satisfactorily. Then came the stern inquiry:

"Have you ever served a jail sentence?"

"No, sir," stammered Si, "but," he added hastily, "I'd be willing to serve a short time if it's necessary."

A bunch of keys and 50 cents in small change will rattle louder than a hundred dollars in bills, but the trouble is, if you don't rattle something others will think you are broke.