

YOUNGSTERS ENJOY SPORTS

SLIDING IS ALL THE RAGE BETWEEN YOUNG.

Handsleds of the City Working Over Time Everywhere.

The youngsters of the city at least are enjoying the snow that has covered the ground since Friday night. All day Saturday and Sunday the hills in the city have been kept busy with the little sleds and yesterday automobiles could be seen with from five to ten sleds hooked on behind, hauling the youngsters over the city. The slippery conditions of the streets has also resulted in many bad falls for both old and young, although no serious results, other than a severe shaking-up have resulted from the slips so far.

FORMER BASEBALL WAR.

Twenty-five Survivors Are Still in the Game.

Although but twenty-five of the 330 ball players who figured in the American and National league races of 1902, the last year of the American league baseball war, still remain in the big arena, a team composed of these veterans, all of whom have been in the game upward of fourteen seasons, would be capable of holding its own with any that might be selected today.

All of these players are far above the average in intelligence, which accounts for their remaining in the game so long, are excellent fielders, great batsmen and, with one or two exceptions, grand base runners.

This all star team would line up as follows:

Mathewson, Plank and Hess, pitchers; Bresnahan and Doolin, catchers; Lajole, first base; Evers, second base; Wagner, shortstop; Wallace, third base; Callahan, left field; Leach, center field; Crawford, right field.

The manager for this team could be selected from among John McGraw, Fielder Jones, Clarke Griffith, Frank Chance, Hugh Jennings, Wilbert Robinson and Fred Clarke, as all of these former stars were in the game in 1902. Griffith and McGraw being pilots as now.

Gunboat Smith Expects to Get Fight With Johnson



Photo by American Press Association.

GUNBOAT SMITH is hopeful of getting a meeting with Jack Johnson before he ends his ring career, and he is plugging away with that end in view. His prospects were tolerably bright until he was knocked out by Sam Langford, but he argues that his previous record is such that one failure should not be taken as final. Incidentally Gunboat has expressed a willingness to meet Jess Willard, who is matched with the negro champion and whose backers guaranteed a purse of \$200,000 to the negro. Gunboat is an outstanding contender.

MATHEWSON TO USE SPITBALL

"Big Six" Will Try Salivary Delivery Next Year.

BATTERS HAVE SOLVED HIM

His Work the Past Season Shows He is Less Effective, and McGraw Has Consented to Let Him Adopt Puz-zling Ball—His Control is a Handicap, and He is Losing His Speed.

Christopher Mathewson will probably be found using the spitball next season in an effort to retain his usefulness as a pitcher. He is under contract for two years longer with the New York Giants, and he does not want those two years to be what his last two months the past season were.

Matty knows full well that he is no longer a young man in full vigor of athletic ability and recognizes the fact that he is not as effective as he was in his prime.

It has been said that the great pitcher can pitch for several years after his arm goes back on him—on what he knows. There is some truth in that, but still he feels that if he adopts a new delivery his years of active service will be lengthened.

Matty has been pitching so long that his deliveries that were once so puzzling have become less effective than in the past, for the reason that the opponents have become so familiar with his style that they stand up before him with all the confidence in the world and just lay back and wait for the balls they expect.

There was a time when if a batter made more than a single off "Big Six" it was a rarity. But now as many long drives are made off him and as frequently as off other pitchers with much less reputation.

Matty has always had better control than any other pitcher who ever occupied the box. Now, as the time has arrived that he has not the speed he used to have, he finds that his accuracy of aim is a handicap to his effectiveness. Batsmen face him with the utmost confidence, knowing there is no danger of their being hit. It is not often that control works against a pitcher, but it surely does now in Matty's case. If he was a bit more wild he would be much more effective.

By adopting the spitter he thinks he will not be as true in locating the plate.

Manager McGraw has never allowed his pitching crack to use the spitball. In fact, none of the Giants pitchers, with the exception of "Bugs" Raymond and "Big Jeff" Tesreau, have been allowed to throw it. But McGraw, wishing to have Matty on his team as long as possible, has told Matty to go as far as he likes from now on and to pitch any kind of ball he wants to.

Matty has been influenced largely in his determination to adopt the damp sally by the success of Leon Ames the past season in taking up the delivery. Ames was never much on control when he was a Giant, and the fact that he seemed to improve in accuracy of aim when using the spitter influenced "Big Six" in his decision.

It will be remembered that Jack Chesbro, after he left Pittsburgh and joined the Yankees, adopted the spitter and became wonderfully effective with it. Jack's arm had gone stale and he saw that the only way he could continue in the game was to pick up something new, and he selected the spitter as a means of salvation. He succeeded beyond his fondest hopes.

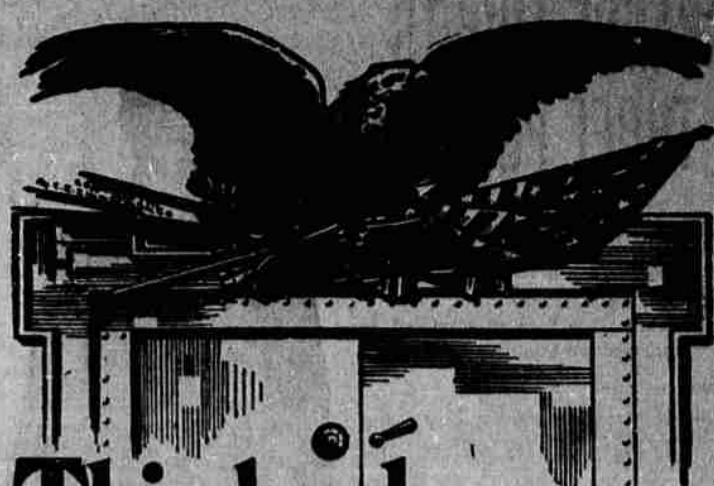
The fact that he pulled the Yankees up to contenders in the race up to the very last day of the season, although the championship was lost by his wild pitch, proves that Chesbro's showing was phenomenal.

Matty should be able to get even better control than any pitcher who has tried the spitter. One spring in Marlin Matty experimented with the saliva pellet, and he fairly made the ball talk. It would take three or four little jumps or quiver in the air from the box to the plate, and a sporting writer named the new delivery the "quiver." It took the funniest gyrations imaginable.

Although there have been many claimants to the discovery of the spitball, some critics are inclined to believe that Frank Bowerman is entitled to the credit of being the Christopher Columbus of the delivery. Frank was a catcher, but he had inclinations to become a pitcher, and whenever he could induce any one to catch him, which was seldom, he would always toss up the ball after wetting it, and it would shoot and jump in the most puzzling manner. This was fully fifteen years ago.

The Middleweight Championship.

If some enterprising promoter is eager to settle the middleweight championship he will try to match Mike Gibbons and Jimmy Clabby. But there may be a hitch if Clabby cannot make 158 pounds ringside. Gibbons says that he will insist on the regular American limit if Clabby wants to meet him. The St. Paul boxer declares that he cannot build himself above 154 pounds and that he is willing to concede the difference between that weight and the 158 pound limit to clinch a match. One thing is sure, however—Gibbons will demand a big guarantee to box Clabby ten or twenty rounds, while the latter also will hold out for at least \$10,000.



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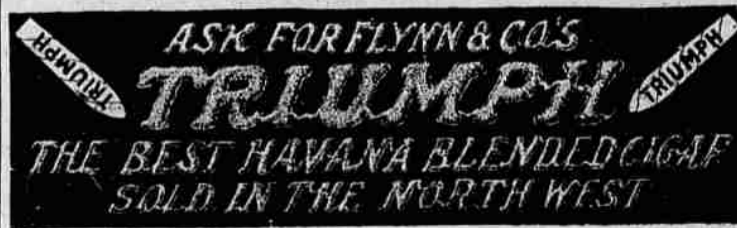
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LEIGHTON'S GARAGE

TWENTY-ONE LIMIT HURTS

MANY YOUNGSTERS WILL BE DEPRIVED TRYOUT.

Big Leaguers Making up Many Promising Bushers This Year.

By HAL SHERIDAN. (Written for the United Press.)

New York, Dec. 28.—The twenty-one player limit invoked by the National League at its recent meeting here will cut off many a promising youngster from his chances with a big team. Practically every team in the league has already signed from thirty to fifty players. The number must be cut to twenty-one by May 1. Many of the youngsters whom managers would like to retain during the season will get the axe before they have an opportunity of showing their worth.

The Central association and the Three-I League are still furnishing the player market with "comers." W. L. Flannigan, who pitched for the Muscatine team last year in the Central Association, has been signed by the Giants. His six feet odd inches of height and a lightning like delivery are said to be his features. McGraw also signed up Eddie Holloway from the Springfield team of the Three-I league. Last year Holloway made good as a fast man and a hard hitter.

Around the lobbies of the Waldorf and the Imperial during the meetings of the National and International leagues here were seen many of the veteran big leaguers, released after years of baseball service, Mike Donlin and Wiltse of the Giants were on hand pondering their prospects for the coming season. Both were gingerly fingering their unconditional releases. Germany Schaffer, the comedian of the Washington club, will be missed next year. Many a laugh burst from the fans when Germany was indulging in his favorite "horse play."

SNAKE MAKES HOLE BELOW PAR SCORE.

Green gartersnakes are found in the vicinity of Chicago. Dr. Gates of the Ravenswood Golf club is an early morning player. Several days ago he made a short pitch to the third green, his ball stopping close to the hole. He had visions of a par four. On approaching the hole he found a snake coiled to the ball. The reptile, fearing the good doctor was about to operate on him, started to retreat, but in its haste knocked the ball into the hole.

The doctor wants to know if he should claim a three or take it for granted he would have holed the putt and claim a four.

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