

## In Gentle Art of Slamming Out a Safe One, Bringing in a Needed Run at a Game's Critical Point, No Big Leaguer Excels Joseph Bert Tinker, the Star Shortstop of the Chicago Cubs. Using W. E. Whiston as His Quill-wielder He Gives Some Interesting Side-lights on This Angle of the National Sport.

WHEN Joseph Bert Tinker, star shortstop of the Chicago Cubs, first made his debut in the big league company, back in 1901, it was primarily due to the fact that he had gained a reputation as a player who was nearly always good for a safe hit at a game's critical point. He could be depended on to smash out a hard drive in the hour of his team's most urgent need, and this faculty he has retained ever since. Wherever baseball is played Tinker is known as one of the ablest pinch hitters that ever wielded a willow.

The fans are always on tiptoe with anticipation when they see his stocky figure ambling toward the plate, especially when there's a man or two on bases and Chicago needs a run to tie the score. And it's seldom that Tinker disappoints.

I found that Tinker himself was prone to disclaim any unusual ability as a batsman who could be depended on to pull his team out of a tight hole when I talked with him during the recent series between the Cubs and McGraw's Giants on the New York Polo Grounds. Tinker prefers to play the game to talking for publication, and when I asked him to reveal the secrets of pinch ball he laughed.

"Why, there's nothing to it," he declared. "It's all a matter of chance and luck. Besides, a man who may be a crackjack pinch hitter against one team is just as likely to be absolutely worthless against another."

"It all depends on whether he is feeling fit that particular day, or whether the pitcher isn't. Then, again, the element of luck plays a big part. A ball that he'd miss by a mile on one occasion may fit right into his bat on another. And that's the way it goes."

"For instance," said the player, as he warmed up to his subject, "in New York I am looked upon as a pretty fair sort of a pinch hitter. Well, there are other teams in the league who don't worry about me at all. They seem to think I am helpless in case of an emergency. They would rather have me up at the bat with three men on bases and two out than any 5-year-old enthusiast you ever saw."

"Now this very same thing may be said of any player in any league who has the reputation of being a pinch hitter. There is our old friend, Hans Wagner, of the Pirates. I've seen the Chicago pitchers pass a hitter like Fred Clarke, who is a pinch hitter, because they figured that Clarke was better in a pinch than Wagner. Of course this doesn't always figure out to be the case, and I have seen the Chicago pitchers knock out a single and

even a double. But it simply goes to show that while nearly every team in the league would dodge Wagner on account of his reputation as a pinch hitter, Chicago would rather have him at bat. He is a player who, while he is not a great hitter, is an excellent player, doesn't appeal to the average fan as so much of a foe as Wagner would be.

"A man doesn't have to be a fan or an expert to know that no player can be expected to hit a ball every time he comes to bat. If he did baseball probably wouldn't be as interesting a sport as it is now. Everybody has his own opinion as to who he thinks is the best pinch hitter. For myself, I consider Fred Clarke the most dangerous man in a pinch. Larry Doyle, too, of the New Yorks, is considered a hard proposition for a pitcher in a pinch. Roger Bresnahan, of St. Louis is another who most any pitcher in the league hates to see at the plate when a hit is needed."

"I might go on and mention 30 or 40 players who, against different teams and different pitchers, are all pinch men. While on the other hand these same players, when pitted against a different team and a different pitcher, are considered nothing out of the ordinary."

"Perhaps the worst fall down in my career as a pinch hitter—or at least the one that I always remember with a deep feeling of chagrin—occurred two years ago in the world's series with Philadelphia at Chicago. It proved to be the last game. With three men on bases and no outs, Coombs struck me out. I don't believe I will ever get over that incident, for it will always make me think that if I had got a single little hit at that time, the Chicago might have been the champions for that year. Of course that one game wouldn't have done it, but it would have given us a chance to play another game, and as baseball is a game of chance, Chicago might have won the series."

"Now Archer, one of the best pinch hitters in the league, feels just as badly about this incident as I do. He followed me to bat and Coombs struck the same trick on him. That just shows you how much luck and chance plays a part in baseball. The chances seemed to be all in favor of at least one hit coming with Archer and myself at bat, but you see that both luck and chance were against us on this occasion, and as a result they won."

"Devore was never able to touch up three-fingered Brown, a very hard and fast pitcher. I thought that after Brown 'beamed' him in Chicago Devore would be still worse off when he faced the three-fingered wonder again. Still, in the very next series played at the Polo Grounds Devore got five hits off Brown. One of them was what the fans

generally term a pinch hit. So you will see that almost any player, at some time or another, is bound to get a hit at the psychological moment."

"No doubt the situation at the time the player goes to bat has a lot to do with his feelings, regardless of the instructions he may receive when he leaves the bench. When I face a pitcher and we have a good lead I often try to place the ball in some certain spot, whereas if we have men on bases and a hit means a run I simply do the best I can to get one."

"There are any number of big leaguers who can put the ball just where they please. Not every time, of course, but I've seen it demonstrated enough times to know that such men as Doyle of the Giants, Wagner of the Pittsburghs, Zimmerman of our team and a score of others can hit the ball to pretty nearly any part of the diamond they choose."

"Judging from his record and what I have seen of his pitching in tight places I should say that Big Ed Walsh, of the White Sox, is the hardest man in the business for a pinch hitter to be successful against. His record shows that he has more men left on bases than any other pitcher in the league. I have seen him pitch a game in which he has more men left on bases than any other pitcher in the league. I have seen him pitch a game in which he has more men left on bases than any other pitcher in the league. I have seen him pitch a game in which he has more men left on bases than any other pitcher in the league."

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"Fans all over the country remember the New York-Chicago series of 1903, just before the world's series. At the last game of that series something happened which will always be a source of jubilation to me, because I started the batting rally in the fourth inning which made us win the game and the series. Matty was pitching for New York, and I, the first man up, drove out a three-base hit. By the time the necessary three outs were made we had run the ball four times."

"But while there is a lot of work on the diamond, there is also a lot of fun. I remember one instance where Big Chief Meyers, of New York, caught me napping off third base. He started to run me down and I slid back onto third, while the Chief, mistaking Devore for me, touched him. After the game I overheard McGraw say:

"'Chief, if you ever display any baseball brains on the field I'll buy you a box of cigars.'"

"And the Chief, with the most serious

expression that one could imagine, replied:

"I don't smoke."

"On another occasion White was pitching for the Giants. The first time up I got a three-bagger, which landed right over in St. Seymour's territory. The next one counted for two bases, and the third, a home run, made St. Seymour nearly out to the fence. When we were changing positions St. Seymour said:

"'If you played against New York all the time you probably would be batting 1000. How is it you manage to hit so well against us and yet you're not such a much when it comes to playing against other teams?'"

"Well, I'll tell you, St.," I replied. "All the other center fielders have been catching those balls you have been letting get away for home runs and three-baggers."

"During the early part of my career as a ball player things didn't run along as smoothly as they do now. For instance, I remember when I was sold from one team to another for \$2. It was back in Kansas City in 1896. I was playing third base for the John Taylors. I only weighed 137 pounds in those days, and long drives were few and far between. I guess my fielding and throwing held my job with this team for two years, and then the manager

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sold me to Hagen's Tailors for the \$2. I stayed with them a year and then started out with the J. F. Schmelzer team, representing a sporting goods

"Johnny Kling, who afterward became a catcher in the big league, and who has often been termed the peer of all catchers, was also with this team. About the middle of the season Claude East—to whom, by the way, I owe my chance for making the big league—picked up a team to represent Parsons, Kan., a town which is really on the map. We played on the co-operative plan, share-and-share alike. The usual division was about \$1.25 for each man per game."

"If it rained on Saturday and Sunday most of us would have to go hungry during the week. One day we got a game with a team located in a town about 20 miles from Parsons. We wired the manager that he would have to send \$11 to defray traveling expenses. He wired it all right. And when the bunch saw that bank roll, which in those days looked pretty large, they decided that we would beat it on a freight train and split the \$11."

"About 10 miles out a brakeman put us off, and then there the Parsons co-operative team disbanded for life. I went to Coffeyville, Kan., where Johnson, who is now pitching such a star game for the Senators, was holding down the mound. I was made captain, and in a series of three games against the Kansas City Blues of the American Association I made seven hits. "At the close of the season I was recommended to George Tebeau, who had the Denver team, joining them in the Spring of 1900. I had always played third base, and Tebeau put me on second. The result was that I was released."

"John McCloskey, former manager of the St. Louis Nationals, was then holding down the same position with the Great Falls, Mont. team, and there they have split seasons. The team were winning the championship of the first half plays the victor of the second half. Helme and Great Falls were the winning teams, and the papers out in that section were kind enough to say that it was my hitting which won the championship in each instance."

"When I struck Great Falls, by the way, I had one lone dollar. A shave, a haircut and a meal landed me at the ball grounds broke. I was lucky enough to drive out a home run which won the game. Up to this time Great Falls had lost nine straight. The crowd was so enthusiastic over this victory

"I know I won't be able to play ball all my life, and I have taken up the automobile game as a side line. Now when the day comes that it's a case of quit the game or go back to the bushes, I can command a pretty fair salary selling toy wagons."

"Not wishing to lose two dollars more than we were getting, I tried to smooth things over, and asked him where we had cut. 'Why, that tumbling your partner did, the best part of the ring of his chair and landed on his head in the orchestra pit.'

"Luckily he wasn't badly hurt, and after the evening performance, which went off smoothly, the manager came to us, and in a voice that was meant to be harsh, said: 'Don't you fellows know the rules and regulations of this house? I told him that I thought we did. Then, said he, 'what do you mean by cutting your act? I've a good mind to fine you each five dollars.'"

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that someone immediately took up a collection which netted me \$8.50.

"John Grimm, of the Portland Pacific Northwest League, signed me up. My work at third for that team attracted the attention of the scouts for the Cubs, and in the Fall of 1901 I signed with Chicago. Frank G. Seelye, who was handling the Chicago team at that time, decided that he couldn't use me at third, and to him I owe my chance at shortstop, in which position my friends have been pleased to say that I have done fairly well."

"During the past three winters I have been playing in vaudeville, and while I feel pretty much at home on the stage now, I had an awful time at first getting used to the footlights. When I first went into the show business I started with another ball player. We had intended doing a hand act. We went to a little town just out of Chicago to smooth out the act before opening in the city."

"The owner, manager, stage manager, ticket taker and promoter, which was a specimen of a rube as one would wish to meet. During the afternoon performance my partner, who was a rather small fellow, caught his foot in the ring of his chair and landed on his head in the orchestra pit."

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## Terse Tales From Humorous Pens