

Future Kings of The DIAMOND PLAY ON CITY LOTS

Marquards, Lajoies, Matthewsons and Cobbs of 1932 Are Now Swinging Bats and Pitching Curved Balls Daily and Calling to Each Other, "Say, Ain't Baseball a Grand Old Game?"

BY LOUISE BOULAN.
AT 'er up! Bat 'er up!
"Steal, Skinny, steal!"
"You're out, you boob, you're out!"

"Gwan back to that base, or I'll punch your face!"
"Aw, you don't know nothing about it!"

Such cries as these tear the air, fill the world with tumult, cause the universe to stand still a moment to investigate what can be the matter.
"What can it be?" asks an anxious mother.

All we might have known it. It is only a demonstration of the good old National game as it should be played that is now taking place on the empty corner lot. The Tenth-street Champions are putting their skill against the Park Gang and it looks like battle to the death, or at least to the ninth inning.

You step to the old picket fence upon whose peaks a group of small critics perch with seeming comfort and enjoy the same privilege as their elders on Vaughn street to express their several opinions upon the "rottenness" or the "gloriousness" of it all. They are the bleachers, the umpire and at times even the coach of the "grounds"; for at critical moments when their disgusted feelings become too strong for any mere vocabulary, they slide down and give the offending member a detailed lesson on baseball as it should be played and is played by "any feller that knows a baseball from a baby's yarn ball."

WITH some difficulty you discover the bases. They are made of old sticks and paper and at first you might mistake them for small rubbish heaps. If you do, don't say it out loud. You might get a look of ineffable scorn for your lack of imagination from some small boy nearby, and a small boy's scornful glance has peculiar quality all its own for making you feel small. The bases sometimes slide as much as the players and then tempestuous disputes arise over the exact location. The settlement of these little arguments proves only too well the truth of the small boy's religion—that the fist is mightier than the umpire.

The red-haired pitcher boasts the proud possession of a real baseball suit—a purple one—which he feels puts him one step further upward into the Wagner-Cobb-Matthewson class.



A Ticklish Decision For The Umpire.



The Bleachers



The Catcher And Pitcher Whispering Signals.



Caught On The Fly.



Jim raise Up To Bat.

Consciousness of it makes him give a ball and a more deliberate hitch to extra furious swing before delivering his trousers as he strolls back to the

box. You notice him first because the color combination of his hair and suit fairly shrieks at you. You wonder if it made all the noise you heard when coming up the street.

The other players have no suits but favor overalls—that is, their mothers favor overalls. Some have feet encased in tennis shoes with extra openings for the toes. That little fellow's feet over there look like a merger of those of a Marathon athlete and an esthetic dancer.

THEY all pose in approved baseball attitudes. Don't talk about the unconsciousness of self of young boyhood. They fairly revel in effective attitudes as in their mind's eye they see future photographs of themselves eagerly scanned by the devotees of the sporting page. Johnny, the little



catcher, crouches down in that tense knot-hole at the real games. Slimmie, squatting fashion which he has often studied in every detail through the

the critical moment. And when little tow-headed Paul comes up to bat he looks quite murderous and with a vicious hit at the ball twists around in regulation style on one heel. Jack, who just now fills the position of coach, attempts a modest ballet cork-screw to express his enjoyment of Shorty's home-run and doesn't mind it in the least when the cork-screw makes him lose his balance and sends him sprawling on his back—as cork-screws sometimes have a habit of making a man do. With many such nods and grins the catcher and pitcher whisper signals which are so intricate that they are forgotten every five minutes and have to be renewed.

An important member of the team, who must not be forgotten is Towser, an uncertain breed of dog. Towser is official mascot, but sometimes gets the duties of his office mixed up and feels that after all, the only way to see that a ball is properly caught is to attend to it himself. Of course, after the little excursions away from the dignity of his real position he gets tied up. Yelps and howls express his realization of such ignominious treatment, but somehow after a few balls have been fumbled and pronounced "rotten" by the picket fence critics, Towser is there again to show how it should be done.

WHEN they catch sight of a real grown-up watching them they all show off their singular gifts more than ever, although the height of their art is to pretend utter indifference to your presence. They bat and twirl, pitch and yell, slide and run more furiously than before—but never a glance in your direction. Far be it from the purpose of any mere feminine writer to describe the game itself. When you have essayed once or twice to read a description of a game which you have personally witnessed and have been appalled to learn about all the horrible things that had been happening right under your nose by such seemingly harmless fellows—well, you begin to assume that perhaps it is better for trust in baseball mankind to look at the players and not bother your head about what they really do. What these little fellows did was very important, I am sure, judging from their actions, and really demanded a special write-up. It's too bad the sporting editor did not happen to be around.

The whole little bunch of players fill you with a certain respect. Their surprising knowledge of the intricacies of the game, the sense of fairness which is uppermost in spite of the most undying loyalty to their own team, the knowing curves of the pitcher whose name some day may be famous, even the slangy, intelligent little comments by the picket fence fans, all make you regard them with a little more seriousness than you thought the situation first called for.

Where do these boys learn it all? It takes George Handolph Chester to answer that. "Learn to play baseball, I didn't. No American kid learns to play baseball. He's born with a full knowledge of the game and is allowed to backstop until he is big enough to swing a bat."

COACHING ON THE INSIDE

by Hughie Jennings.

"HOW much does a team's pennant-winning possibilities depend on a good coach?" was recently asked a prominent baseball authority, and the answer came quick as a shot.

"As much as it depends on teamwork, good pitching or any of the numerous other features essential to success on the diamond. In fact, I'm not certain that it does not count for more," he added. "Without good generalship on the coaching lines probably the best team that ever donned a uniform would make a poor showing against a second rater, provided, of course, that the latter had a first-class coach."

"A coach is the eyes of a team and its brains as well in respect to the score-making possibilities," he continued. "Without one or more good teamwork is impossible, and the day when even an all-star aggregation of players, playing as individuals, could win championship honors has long been past."

And that seems to be the consensus of opinion among baseball experts everywhere.

In Which Hughie Jennings, Manager of the Detroit Tigers, Gives Some Inside Pointers Concerning the Fine Art of Piloting a Runner Around the Bases—All of Which Is Faithfully Transcribed by William E. Whiston, the Baseball Expert.

Hughie Jennings, manager of the Detroit Tigers, and for more than a score of years prominent in big league baseball, is another authority for the statement. As one of the ablest exponents of the generalship and strategy that bring success on the diamond now in the harness, his words carry weight wherever the game is played.

As every fan knows, Hughie won his spurs as the star shortstop of the old Baltimore team when the Orioles were past masters at pennant winning. Many consider him the greatest shortstop that ever lived. And his coaching ability was hardly inferior to his work between second and third.

TODAY as manager of the Tigers he is probably one of the best posted men on the inside angles of the science of coaching in the country. He has been one of those who have brought the art of piloting a runner safely around the bases to its present high stage of development.

"Coaching has always been one of the most important features of the game ever since it was invented," said the Detroit manager, when asked to cast a few sidelights on this feature of the National sport. "It has always been a big factor in a team's success, and this is truer today than it ever was."

"Like every other branch of baseball, however, it has developed tremendously in the past few years, until now it has been reduced to an actual science. Years ago the fans secured nearly as much enjoyment from the antics of the man in the coaching box as they did from the game itself, but it has got so now that instead of a comedian being used as a coach a man who knows thoroughly the fine points of the game and the ability of each player is the one who counts for most."

"While a coach will try to get the pitcher rattled, if such a thing be possible, it is his chief business to take care of the runner and see that he isn't caught napping on the bases. Take for instance when Cobb is on first base, the coach knows that he is fast, and if Crawford follows him and hits what ordinarily would be a single, Cobb will be given a signal to try for third. As a rule he can make it, but even if he is caught the attempt has

put Crawford on second, whereas with a slower man only one base would be all either could make.

"A coach has a signal for every kind of play that can possibly arise. It takes a long time for a man to perfect himself in these different signs.

"YOU may see a player take off his cap, and hold it in his right hand. If he used the left hand it would mean an entirely different play. As the song goes, 'Every little movement has a meaning all its own.'"

"No two teams have anything like the same kind of code, and it is seldom that we are able to get a line on what is going to happen from watching the man in the coaching box. Many of the men who are now top-notchers in the profession were good coaches. McGraw of the Giants was always making the men take chances while he worked on the sideline. The greater portion of his success today and the success of many other managers is due to the fact that they compel the runner to take chances where if allowed to follow his own inclination he would never leave his base."

"That much-talked-of game between New York and Chicago, when Merkle failed to touch second base, is one instance where a coacher, had he been alert and on his job, would have noticed the misplay as soon as the Chicago players, and a very important game would have been won instead of lost."

"There are any number of instances where the coach accomplishes something that the average spectator does not see at all. Once the ball is hit the man on base has nothing to do but run and watch the coacher for his signal. His eyes should be glued on the man in the coaching box, and as he approaches the base the runner knows whether he has got to slide into it or whether he can make it standing."

"If a base runner had to keep track of the ball he would lose considerable time. Of course, a runner lessens his speed every time he looks around, and if he does this he will be put out nine times out of ten. Therein, too, is shown the importance of the coacher's job."

"The signals used by the big league

teams are guarded as sacredly as any cipher code of the Government, and I don't know today of an absolutely authentic one where a player has been known to give away any signal used by his team. Of course, a player may be sold from one team to another and use his knowledge against his old teammates, but the chances are that the signals would be given in such a way as to prevent him from seeing them."

"I had an idea once that a certain team was in possession of our signals, so I changed them during the early part of the game. After we had obtained a safe lead I went back to the regular ones, and I'm glad to say that I soon found that I was mistaken."

"When I first started playing ball, which was back in 1887 with a school team in Moosic, Pa., I discovered that coaching played a very important part in the game. I would stand on the side lines and yell at the opposing pitcher until I'd got him so mad he couldn't find the plate. I also figured out a code of signals which enabled us to beat many a faster team simply because of the aid of these signals we all knew what was coming off and were able to play together."

"The same methods that I used with my old school team I put into action when I first took hold of the Detroit team. Of course, our present code is far more elaborate than the one I used in 1887. There must be over a hundred different signals in use by the Tigers, and each one has an entirely different meaning. A college football team hasn't got half as many signals as the average ball team in the big leagues."

an injury Jack Ryan, the veteran backstop, was temporarily covering the initial sack. About this time along came the Boston bunch with Big Dan Brothers, and after Ryan had stopped several of Dan's fast drives with his anatomy he went to Chapman and told him that he'd had a shot at it or you won't have any catcher left," was the way he put it. The manager took Ryan's advice and I became a first baseman.

"I managed to pull through somehow and in 1892 I was moved to short. I guess this is the position that I covered myself with 'glory and errors.' I didn't take at all to the short field at first. I was more at home behind the bat."

"Illness made me of little use to the Colonels in 1893, and Billy Barnie, who had succeeded Chapman as manager, traded Harry Taylor and myself to Ned Hanlon, of the Baltimore, for 'Voiceless Tim' O'Rourke, who was at that time playing a smashing good game at short. This was only one of the many



In the Coaching Box.



Hughie Jennings, Manager of the Detroit Tigers.

gold brick deals pulled off by Foxy Ned.

"It was on June 6 that the deal was closed, but I didn't appear in a Baltimore uniform until July 5. McGraw, now manager of the New York Giants, who was then covering short for the Orioles, had been benched for a run-in he had had with an umpire at Pittsburgh, and I was elected to take his place. Pittsburgh beat us 2-0, and you can judge what kind of a game I put up when I tell you that the Associated Press dispatches said: 'Jennings' errors were responsible for the loss of the game.'

"IT WAS nearly a month before I got another chance to show what I could do. This time I had no errors

and the same number of hits. I always had a habit of going after everything in sight, and my record shows that in my 12 years of professional ball I had an average of 6.43 chances per game. For three years straight I averaged over seven chances per game.

"As a batter I was pretty easy for the average pitcher until Ned Hanlon showed me how to handle the willow. Ned always had more faith in me than I had in myself, and very few mornings passed that he didn't have me out practicing hitting."

"I was never afraid to stand up to the plate, and I got hit so often that I had a pad made for my hip. After I struck my gait I hit better than .300 all the time, and one season came within

three points of reaching the 400 mark.

"My decline as a batter dated from the afternoon that Amos Rusie almost killed me at the Polo Grounds in New York. I never was as good after that run. My record during the years I played shows that I was in 1512 games, at bat 6725 times, made 1131 runs, hit safely 1761, stole 410 bases, made 228 sacrifice hits, and had a batting average of .308."

"When I first took hold of the Tigers I had my hands full trying to smooth out the rough spots. There was no such thing as teamwork, as hardly any of the players were on speaking terms with each other. It was every man for himself, and it took some fine jollying

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