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Calling cards—The Sentinel.

BASEBALL RACES ARE UNCERTAIN

Anteseason Predictions Are Invariably Upset.

LOOK AT THE ATHLETICS.

Early in Spring Diamond Experts Figured Philadelphia Would Walk Away With Flag, but Team Is Having Hard Time of It.

By TOMMY CLARK
Baseball has a way of upsetting all prognostications. The only sure thing about the game is that it will always be different from what is expected. After the hairline finish in the National league last season it was generally believed that the 1912 race in the older organization would be a thrilling affair, while the American league campaign was figured as simply an uninteresting parade, with the Athletics in the band wagon showing the way.

Many believed the Giants were lucky in winning the pennant in the National in 1911 and that the Phillies, the Pirates and the Cubs would give them a terrible battle this season. They also believed that the Athletic band would run its opponents off their feet early in the game and have the pennant clinched early in the season.

In other words, it seemed certain that the National league would again afford all the excitement, while the American league race would be tame and uninteresting. Conditions are just reversed. While most people are engaged in figuring on just how far the Giants will win, the Johnsonian organization has settled down to a mad hand to hand struggle, with five clubs in the melee and a sixth hanging around the outskirts of the scrap.

John J. McGraw's club is now believed to have better than a two to one chance of repeating in the National league, while it was hardly even money at the close of the 1911 season. Connie Mack's delegation was considered a cinch at any odds to win another pennant in the American league this year, particularly after the world's series, but now in this merry month of July it is believed he will have the fight of his life to overhaul the Boston Red Sox. He may do it—probably most fans believe he will—but a strong element of uncertainty has entered into the matter.

It is a remarkable upsetting of the "dope." The Phillies—supposedly the Giants' most dangerous foe after last season—are nowhere. The McGraw machine is far out in front, and the only new sensation of the National league—the Cincinnati Reds—faded early. Pittsburgh and Chicago are coming very, very slowly, probably too slowly to do them any good, while the other clubs are running to form.

In the American league there have been two distinct surprises—the Chicago White Sox and Washington. The Red Sox are living up to the winter books, as they were always figured in the fight for the job of runner up at least. Cleveland did not do as well as expected, and Detroit has only recently commenced to justify the winter prophets. Meantime the champions of the world are juggling along and showing but little of their 1911 form. It may be argued that they lagged last season, too, but with such delegations as the varicolored Sox out in front it behooves the champs to be up and doing, for this is the month of July.

Meantime John J. McGraw does not worry. He is not claiming the pennant by any means. He believes he will have a fight on his hands yet, as his old enemy—Chance—is commencing to run. Probably in his heart McGraw would rather see Mack win in the American if the Giants repeat in the National, in order to get the opportunity of another try at Gotham's conquerors of last fall.

Nix on that southpaw stuff, Ho. It's bromide. So also are port side, left winder, heart flinder and other expressions used to denote one who pitches the cold saw into the molar pit with the south fork. If you hold your knife in the left mitt you are an Ehud in to date parlance.

Where do we get this? It's easily explained in Orange, N. J., recently a society of the Knights of Ehud was formed, and about the only distinguished person missing was Pitcher Rube Marquard of the Giants. Any body who is left handed in any particular except in his morals is eligible to be a member of the Society of the Ehuds. The society is called after the Hebrew warrior who slew a tyrant more than 3,000 years ago with his left hand.

The Ehuds are historical—in fact, sub-carboniferous. They back up intimately into the time of the Moabitites, when a gentleman—Egdon—was king. It seems Egdon wanted to be re-elected and had the national committee with him. The cost of living was terribly high there, many well to do persons having to forego their joy carts on account of the high cost of beef.

They couldn't get oxen to chaut around behind, you see.
All this was blamed on Egdon, and having the committee with him, the people figured he could just naturally count out any of the popular candidates and continue to boost for the "interests."

CAN YOU BEAT THIS?

One catcher was behind the bat for both teams for sixteen innings in the Cotton States league game between Columbus and Yazoo City in Yazoo City, Miss., recently. In the second inning of the first game the Columbus catcher was hurt, and there was no one to take his place. The Yazoo City catcher volunteered to keep the game going, and it was so agreed by all in authority. Yazoo City won both games.

TIN CAN FOR JENNINGS?

Detroit's Leader Has to Make Good Showing or Lose His Job.
Because he holds a contract that will not expire until next fall Hughie Jennings is in no immediate danger of losing the managership of the Detroit Tigers, but unless his team takes a decided brace and shows a marked improvement both in its play and in its position between now and October he will not manage the club another year. In an interview given out recently President Navin said:

"I am not at all satisfied with the way things are going on the team. Jennings appears to have lost his hold on the men. They seem to have no confidence in his judgment. Our pitchers have been handled poorly, and the



Photo by American Press Association.

GAME ATTRACTS COLLEGIANS

Numerous Highbrows Have Gone In For Chance In Big League.
Professional baseball is attracting an unusually large number of collegians this year. The list includes Eppa Rixey, who went to the Phillies; Charley Hightower of Cornell, who signed with Buffalo, and Nash, Conzelmann and Warner of Brown, who go to Cleveland and Pittsburgh.

Hightower probably chose the wise course in going first to a minor league. Whatever promise he displayed at college will be developed by Stallings, and he will be equipped for big league service when the chief turns him over. Hightower may eventually go to the Giants, as it is pretty certain that George Stallings would give McGraw first crack at any one he develops this year in view of the Giant leader's generosity to Buffalo. McGraw gave Stallings Stock, Bues, Munsell and Fullenwelder. Hightower has given promise of future greatness on various occasions since he has been pitching college ball.

ENGLISH POLOISTS COMING.

Expect to Make Another Try For International Cup Next Year.
With the recapture of the international cup as the incentive, the British polo experts expect to make an invasion of the United States next year, when a second attempt will be made to lift the international cup from the Meadowbrook team, which was won by the Americans in 1909, and there seems to be plenty of material for a strong team, the chief stumbling block being the large sum of money required for the trip.

NOT READY FOR ANOTHER LEAGUE

Big Baseball Circuit Never Successful First Season.
REQUIRES FORTUNE AND TIME

Brains, Time and Hard Work Necessary For Those Who Start New Diamond Organization—How American League Was Formed.
The tough sledding encountered by backers of the United States Baseball league probably will convince promoters that the public is not yet ready for a third major league. After all, that is the only test to be applied. When there is a demand from the public for another circuit in the larger cities success will attend such a venture and not until then. The hoary headed law of supply and demand governs baseball the same as any other commodity, be it necessity, luxury or amusement.
Financial backing always will be forthcoming for a new major league whenever anybody starts one, for there is a popular impression that baseball is an inexhaustible gold mine. But the financial backing such new enterprises command is usually of the kind that expects immediate returns. The idea of possible loss is not taken into account, and when more funds are required from the backers—instead of dividends they are at a loss to understand why.
The launching of a new baseball league is not a matter of a month or a season. It requires time and hard, brainy work to gain the prestige and build up the teams to a standard that will command public patronage to a paying extent. Promoters of such organizations invariably point to the American league as an illustration of how impossible it is for baseball to prove a failure. They have small conception of the fight the American league had to win its success and of the ragged edges on which its existence hung for weeks at a time during its youth.
Everything favored the American league when it started to expand. There was only one major league then, and it occupied only seven cities, for New York and Brooklyn practically were one. That left considerable vacant territory of major league caliber. The National league through lack of a firm executive had fallen into the hands of players who were conducting its games about as they pleased and by kicking and wrangling had driven away a lot of good patrons.
There was a demand for a different kind of baseball in which sport should be supreme and prize ring tactics abolished. The American league set out to supply that demand and found a ready response. It also found favor in the eyes of the major league players by raising the scale of salaries until today they are two and three times greater than those in vogue a dozen years ago.
But in spite of all the favoring circumstances the American league probably never would have been able to stick it out if it had not had in its own ranks Charles W. Somers of Cleveland and if the Cleveland capitalist had known much about baseball.
When the ambitious young organization expanded and invaded the east Somers furnished most of the financial prestige and a lot of the actual backing necessary to secure plants in Philadelphia, Boston and Washington and carried the plans for invading those cities along until other and more timid backers could be shown that the American league meant business. Then, and not until then, was it possible to obtain the kind of owners desired for the new clubs. Resident owners were found except in Boston, which was taken off Somers' hands by Milwaukee men for a time.
Without the daring confidence of Somers the American league would have found it impossible to secure the backing necessary for the immediate inauguration of building operations in the eastern cities, where it established teams in 1901. It was necessary to finance four clubs during the winter of 1900-1901 and to have four plants ready to open the championship season in the spring. The delay incidental to finding homebackers would have been fatal.
For that reason C. W. Somers was elected perpetual vice-president of the American league. For that reason the American public owes Somers a great deal for the revival of baseball and its tremendous growth through the healthy rivalry that resulted from the existence of two major organizations conducted along the lines of clean, honest sport.
The Cleveland magnate was recklessly daring in the quantity of obligations he assumed. That he was not called upon to make good all of them was due to the tact and ability of President Johnson, backed by the personality and reputation of Charles A. Comiskey. But when any one attempts to hand Somers a bouquet or compliment of other nature for his nerve and foresight in risking so much on an uncertain venture he will tell you it was neither nerve nor foresight on his part. He frankly admits now that if he had known as much baseball as he does today he never would have gone into it so deeply and asserts that his foresight was chiefly ignorance of what a new baseball league is up against.

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