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BRIGHT PROSPECTS FOR THE ATHLETICS

Larry Lajoie, Natural Slugger, Now With Connie Mack's Champions.

(By FRANK G. MENKE)
The acquisition of Larry Lajoie makes it seem certain that the Athletics will be in the 1915 pennant fight all the way. Don't be surprised if they get away in the front and lead the parade to the wire, despite efforts of the dangerous Red Sox to do the overhauling stunt.
It seems to be the proper thing just now to spoof the pennant chances of the Athletics simply because Eddie Collins, Charles Bender, Eddie Plank and Jack Coombs no longer have their names enrolled in the lineup. But it seems that the spoofing is somewhat uncalled for.
The loss of Collins seemed to be a terrific blow at first, but the purchase of Lajoie to fill his boots changes the aspect of things. Lajoie is old and he isn't as speedy as Collins. But despite his forty years he still is good a fielder as Collins. He can't run bases like Collins, but in all the years up to last he could hit like Collins—and hit beyond Collins.
Lajoie slumped to .258 in 1914. But he'll hit .300 or better in 1915 or we'll miss our guess. And that's about as good as might be expected from Collins.
Lajoie isn't through as a hitter, even though he is nearing his fortieth year. He's a natural slugger and he'll do a "come back" this year. Great hitters are great hitters as long as they are able to hold a bat. During the coming season Lajoie will be working under a manager who will appreciate him and encourage him. Last year he worked under the fiery Birmingham, and he worked with a team that was torn by internal strife. He worked under conditions where a man could not do his best.
The Athletics aren't going to miss Bender and Plank as much as some folks think. They won't miss Coombs at all because during the past two or three years Coombs has pitched only a few games.
Connie Mack has a squad of youthful hurlers to throw into the breach made by the loss of Bender and Plank, and they look able enough to fill it—and fill it acceptably.
Bob Shawkey looks like one of the best pitchers in the American League. He was worked regularly last year and it gave him confidence. Also it gave him a chance to correct his only fault—wildness. "Rube" Bressler, the port side flinger that Mack secured last year, looks like one of the best youngsters that has busted into the national pastime in many years. He ought to be able to fill the place of Eddie Plank.
Wyckoff and Penock have been with the Mackmen for several seasons. They haven't worked to any great extent because Connie depended largely upon his veteran pitchers, but when they did work they showed they had everything necessary. This season they will get their chance.
Leathe Bush is a good pitcher. He's cool-headed, has a good arm, and he is brainy. He will be one of Connie's regulars this season and great things are expected of him.
In addition to these twirlers, Connie has several other youngsters, who can answer the call of duty and answer it well.
So Connie isn't worrying about 1915.
Would you worry if you were outfitted with ball players like those who will fight under the White Elephant banner in 1915?

FIGHTER HAS FEW FRIENDS
Bantamweight Champion Williams Has Remarkably Slim Following—He Is a Very Clever Boxer.
Considering his great work in the ring and since winning the bantamweight championship, Kid Williams has made remarkably few friends. It might not have been so willing to make a fight of all their bouts. Williams, having two courses to choose from, deserves all the more credit.



Kid Williams, Bantamweight Champion.

CRICKET CLUBS ARE LOSERS
Alarming Deficit Shown by Many Clubs as Result of Dampness on Sport by Outbreak of War.
Most of the prominent professional cricket clubs in England show an alarming financial deficit for the season as a result of the dampness which was put on the sport after August 1. The Lancashire Cricket club, with an annual income of about \$40,000, had a loss of \$6,500. The Northamptonshire club was able to finish its season only through the receipt of a gift of \$2,500 from Lord Lilford, an enthusiastic follower of the sport. The club has decided to abandon the game for the year 1915 and assess all members a sum sufficient to enable the organization to start the 1916 season free of debt.
The Hampshire Club, after beginning the year with a large surplus, finds itself at the end of the season with a deficit of \$4,500. Exact figures are not available for the other prominent clubs, but it is known that all have suffered severely.


Cobb Teaching Son Baseball.
Trus Cobb, Detroit outfielder, is spending much of his time these days playing golf on the links near his Georgia home. He likes golf and follows that pastime to keep in condition during the winter. Ty also is fond of shooting. On many of his outdoor jaunts Cobb is accompanied by his little son, whom he is teaching the rudiments of baseball.

Record Number of Trotting Meets.
W. H. Gecher, secretary of the National Trotting association, reports that more trotting meetings were held in America last season than in any other year since the sport had its origin. Gecher says in all 1,368 meetings were held on something like 1,300 different tracks. About one hundred were on half-mile tracks. There are 99 mile tracks in this country and Canada.

Some Difference.
The difference between a football coach and a baseball manager is that when a football coach calls down his players for making bone plays they believe he knows.

War Threatens English Classic.
The annual eight-oared crew race between Oxford and Cambridge may be called off next year owing to the large number of absentees among the athletes of both universities.

Johnny Evers Has a Grouch.
Johnny Evers is dead against the suggestion that the National league get back to the one umpire system for purposes of retrenchment. Evers says any chump can ride one umpire.

IDLERS DESTROY ALL CHANCES OF PROFIT

Get Rid of the Old Machinery and Have the Most Up-to-Date Labor-Saving Kind—This is an Era of Efficiency.

(By JOHN D. PRENTICE)
A good many years ago I suddenly woke up to the fact that the idlers on the farm are the things that keep a man from making money. When I came West fifteen years ago I visited a big manufacturing plant at Chicago and I was struck by the system which kept everybody and everything busy.
In going through the factory I could not see an idle man nor an idle machine. Everything and everybody was on the jump every minute. No lost motion, no loafing on the job. And as I pondered over the matter on my way to my new farm I began to realize how much I had lost in the past through maintaining idle and unproductive things.
As soon as I got settled I sold off three old horses I had brought with me, and bought two good ones; traded four cows that had never been up to the mark for two that gave more milk than the four ever did, and I invested some of my capital in a flock of 29 sheep, about 100 hens and five of the best brood sows I could buy in the country.
Then I traded an old reaper that I had hauled from central Ohio for five stands of bees and a good plow.
I made up my mind that I would have the best tools and the best live stock that I could buy and that I would make everything on the place earn its keep or know the reason why.
I had brought with me an old threshing machine with which I used to go around through our neighborhood in Ohio every fall doing odd jobs of threshing. Of course I made a little money at this, but when I figured out the time the old machine stood idle—about ten months in the year—and repairs I had to pay for and the time spent in hunting up jobs, I quickly discovered that the old rattletrap had cost me a good deal of money.
I traded the outfit for a bunch of yearling calves and felt that I had a load off my chest.
Within a week after I had made my trades and purchases I had the sheep busy cleaning up a 20-acre pasture, over 100 chickens were scratching their living out of the fields, the hogs were putting on flesh; the cows made more butter than we could use, which brought us in cash every week, and the calves were laying money on their ribs right along. Everything was working nigh, and day.
Of course I could not make all the changes I wanted at once, but within six months every head of live stock on the place was good of its kind, and profitable. That is the main thing, to invest one's capital only in things that will bring returns on the investment.
I never before had realized how greatly handicapped the farmer is who tries to work with old, half worn-out machinery, decrepit horses that cannot do more than a half day's work in a day, cows that eat more than they earn, and who has no poultry or sheep to clean up the stuff that would otherwise go to waste.
By changing my methods I have made three times as much money since I came to South Dakota as I ever did in Ohio, although I do not think my land is any better and we do not work as hard.
I have exactly the same amount of land I had in Ohio and perhaps I have learned how to farm it better, but I attribute what little success I have had to the fact that everything on the place is productive and that I keep everybody and everything busy every minute I can.

GOOD PROTECTION FOR TREES
Pennsylvania Expert Recommends That All Litter Be Removed and Earth Mound Be Erected.
The damage to trees, particularly in young orchards, from gnawing by rabbits and mice during the winter-time is very great. Last winter in particular there was an unusual abundance of field mice. When the snow thawed from meadows the burrows of mice could be seen extending in all directions. Many young trees planted in sod or where manure or mulch came closely around their bases were completely girdled by these animals. As a precautionary measure, Professor Paddock of Ohio college of agriculture recommends that litter of all kinds be removed from around the trunks of young trees and that a six-inch mound of earth thrown about trunks of such trees is also a good plan. This protection of earth also safeguards to a certain extent against winter injury.
One does not want to go to the other extreme, however, and remove all covering from off the young tree roots. Experiment has shown that a certain amount of organic matter in or on the soil will often protect the trees from injury during a hard winter.
Rabbits are always present and the possibility of injuries should always be guarded against. One of the ways recommended for preventing the rabbits from gnawing the trees is to protect them with some form of tree protector. This may either be a cylinder of fine-meshed woven wire or wood veneer or cloth.

POTATO ROTS QUITE COSTLY
Important to Treat All Tubers Showing Affection With Solution of Mercury Bichloride.
Various types of rot annually destroy many thousands of dollars' worth of potatoes. The rot responsible for much of these damages are internal brown rot, powdery dry rot, soft rot and stem rot.
Very often tubers are attacked in the field or in storage by a soft rot which quickly reduces the potatoes to a soft, slimy, foul-smelling mass.
The stem rot fungus, rhizoctonia, produces on the tubers small dark brown bodies which resemble bits of soil. These bodies are the wintering-over stage of the fungus and may spread very rapidly from one tuber to another under improper methods of storage. While this fungus does not itself cause a rot of the tuber, it may pave the way for such rot-producing organisms as the dry and soft rots. Of these diseases, rhizoctonia and the organism causing the internal brown rot only produce a wilting of the vine. It is, therefore, important to treat all tubers showing the presence of the brown soil-like bodies with a solution of mercury bichloride and to discard for seed all tubers showing the brown ring discoloration.
Internal brown rot may live in the soil for five or six years. If potatoes are grown continually year after year on the same soil these organisms will increase in number, and, as a consequence, the percentage of wilted vines and rotted tubers will also increase until in a few years the soil will be entirely worthless for growing potatoes.
Since all of these diseases live over winter on or in the tubers, it is imperative that seed treatment and seed selection be practiced in order to prevent a recurrence of the troubles the following year. This, together with the other precautions given, will prevent the spread of these diseases and reduce the loss in storage.

Good Type of Brood Sow.
In selecting a brood sow, form is first to be considered. The body should be finely built, vigorous, long with heavy quarters, flat back, short snout, ears and limbs. The neck should not be too short. She should be a vigorous feeder, with great capacity, because an indifferent feeder will starve her pigs. A sow whose litters range less than eight to twelve pigs each is a failure.
Raising Calves by Hand.
Calves can be raised very successfully upon skim milk properly supplemented. It is possible to raise them, after a few weeks of age, upon milk substitutes. No inflexible rule as to amount of feed can be given. Even skim milk varies in food value, and calves vary as to their requirements.

BRIEF NEWS OF NEBRASKA

Fairbury will be in the state baseball league next season.
Otoe will have a county baseball league the coming season.
Tecumseh got sixteen inches of snow during the recent storm.
Society women of the Hastings Y. W. C. A. have organized a bowling club.
State manufacturers will hold their annual show at Lincoln, February 23 to 26.
William Herbert, a pioneer of Omaha, is dead at that place at the age of 96 years.
D. C. Kilpatrick was found dead in a snow drift a short distance from his home at Falls City.
Retail hardware merchants of the state will hold a convention at Omaha, February 9 to 12.
Retailers of the state will hold their next annual meeting at Lincoln, February 23 to 26.
Auburn will hold her annual fiddlers' contest, open to the state, on the evening of February 4.
University Place people decided by election to push a proposed project for a library for that place.
Dr. L. C. Kigin, state veterinarian, has tendered his resignation to the live stock sanitary board.
After a pastorate of nearly seven years at Steinaur, Rev. Father Fess has been transferred to Hebron.
Burglars entered the store of Bonebright & Bunte at Cortland and carried away goods valued at \$1,200.
Rev. H. Hallberg, for eight years pastor of the German Evangelical church, near Arlington, has resigned.
Lincoln has been invaded by the jigger car. It is said a number of them will be put on the streets at once.
Judge Conrad Hollenbeck, chief justice of the Nebraska supreme court, died at Lincoln, Thursday, of heart failure.
The Cornhusker basketball team won second game from the Kansas "Aggies" 26 to 29 and tied first, 22 to 12.
Owing to an epidemic of measles at Elmwood, several rooms of the public school have been closed until it abates.
Weeping Water W. C. T. U. has requested the school board at that place to have the Bible read in the public schools.
William Kuhn, of Blue Springs, aged 77, was stricken with apoplexy and fell dead in his yard while feeding chickens.
Columbus will have a primary election February 9 to decide on a postmaster. There are five candidates for the place.
Fairbury baseball fans have organized an association, and will put that town on the map by means of a state league team.
Chimes costing approximately \$10,000 will be furnished for the new \$65,000 Methodist church at Hastings by W. H. Lanning.
State Field Veterinarian Day says the ravages of the corn stalk disease among horses are the worst in the history of Nebraska.
Ross Hammond of Fremont and C. H. Gustafson of Mead will discuss community interests at the retailers' convention at Lincoln, February 23.
The fund for establishing a Y. M. C. A. at University Place has passed the \$1,000 mark. It will be pushed until the amount asked for, \$1,600, is raised.
Miss Lydia Meddles, telephone girl at Hastings, drank hair shampoo, mistaking it for medicine. Though seriously ill for several hours, she has recovered.
Ex-Senator Glover's barn, near Ansley, was burned and several fine horses perished in the flames, when a charcoal stove used as a foot-warmer set fire to a sleigh.
A Fremont woman has brought suit against the Canadian Pacific Railroad Company for the alleged loss of \$2,400 worth of diamonds while a passenger on one of its trains.
An increase in price of a quarter of a cent a cubic centimeter will be charged by the state farm for hog cholera serum after February 15, according to an announcement.
Eight cylinder automobiles, the very latest in automobile construction, will be the feature of the Omaha Automobile Show, which will be held in the Auditorium, February 15 to 29.
After a search of five years at a cost estimated at \$200,000, detectives have caught Henry G. Fisher, wanted at Fremont, among dozens of other places, for swindling John O'Connor out of \$3,000.
Over 1,500 sacks of Nebraska grown apples were given away at the closing of the state fruit growers' association show at Lincoln.
The Shorthorn breeders' association at Lincoln elected Charles Ritchie of Gresham, president; E. W. Cosgrove, Farnam, vice president; Irwin Wilson, Belvidere, secretary; Albert Johnson, Douglas, treasurer.
The annual meeting of the Nebraska Peace society will be held at the First Presbyterian church at Lincoln, February 17. Many prominent speakers and workers along this line will be present.
Miss Catherine Butt, for nineteen years postmistress at Unadilla, has resigned and a civil service examination will be held to fill the vacancy.
The widow of Nick Peilen, who died in a drunken stupor in the Nebraska county jail, has brought suit for \$5,000 against three saloon keepers and their bondsmen for selling him liquor.
Mrs. Fannie Kouty, of Omaha, was overcome by smoke and seriously injured while trying to save the lives of her two little girls who had set the house on fire during her temporary absence.
Little Frances Reynolds, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Walt B. Reynolds of Fremont, has received a letter from 12-year-old Alfred Bray of County Cork, Ireland, thanking her for a toy which she sent with other presents which were shipped on the Christmas ship, Jason.
The motorman on a trolley car at Lincoln was seized with dizziness and fell from his post to the side of the track and the car continued on its trip until it stopped of its own accord on a curve at the end of the line. The four passengers aboard had a thrilling ride.