

# Western Is First and Only League to Hang Up Batting Mark of .300 for Season

## Circuit Boasts of Half Dozen Minor Records

Tearney Loop Only One in Organized Baseball to Have Five of its Teams Finish Over .300 Figure.

QUARTER of a century has seen Western league records mount higher and higher until that circuit now boasts half a dozen minor league records and some that have been unsurpassed even in the majors, yet there is this to encourage its athletes as they prepare for another campaign: there never has been a year that some league record has not been broken.

It was thought the pinnacle had been reached in 1921, when 19 of the 64 items for which records had been compiled were shattered, the new marks apparently defying future attack.

Yet, several went by the boards the next year, and 1923 saw new records established in eight events. Some World Records.

The Western league is the first and only league to hang up a league batting record of .300. It has done this for the last two years.

It is the only league to have five of its teams finish the season with batting records above .300, Tulsa, Des Moines, Sioux City, Wichita and Omaha doing it last year.

Tulsa established a world record when it batted .323 in 1922 and boosted it again last year with .327. In 1922 Tulsa set a world record by polling out 160 home runs.

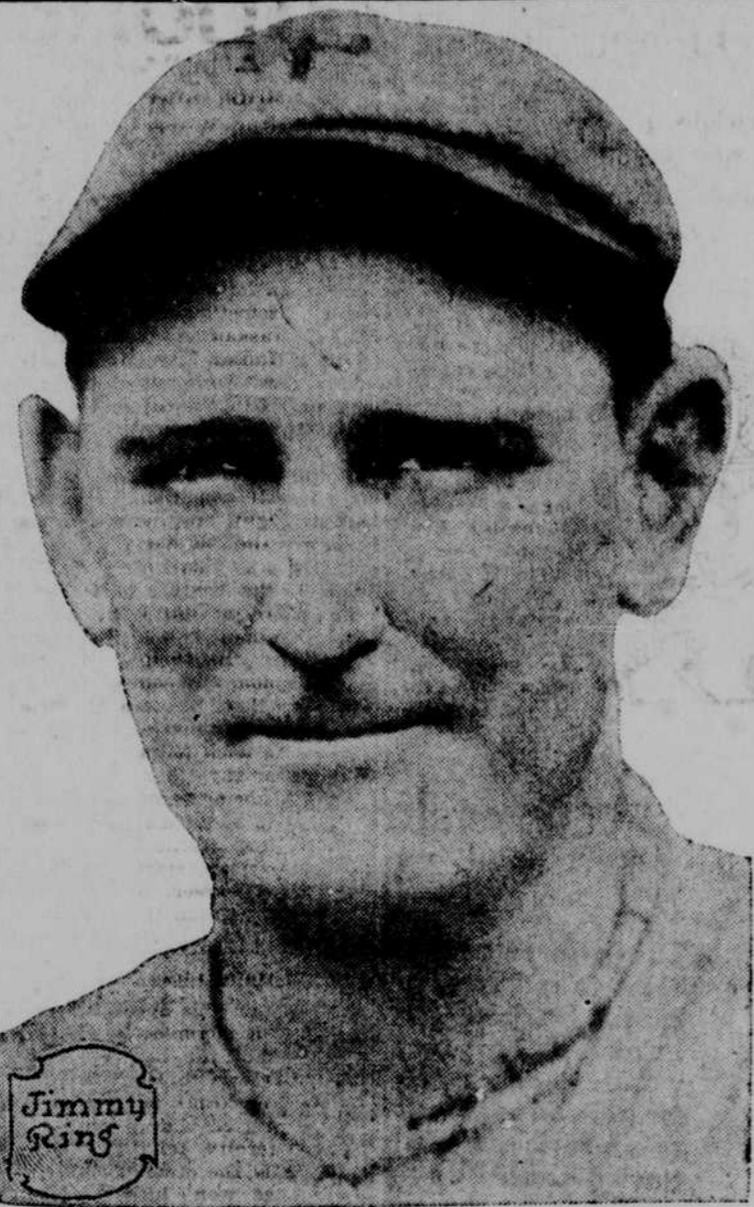
Joe Wilhoit of Wichita set a world record when he hit in 69 consecutive games in 1919.

George Harper of Oklahoma City established a minor league record in 1921 by accepting 515 fielding chances in centerfield, the Pacific Coast league excepted of course, for out there they play 200 games. Harper's record consisted of 486 put-outs and 29 assists. He had only nine errors.

Since the ban was placed on the spitter and other freak deliveries, pitching records have been practically immune, while the sluggers have shoved marks higher and higher.

It is interesting to note, however, that in spite of the fact that he worked without any of the cheater deliveries, George Boehler in 1922 came within four strikeouts of establishing a new mark for whiffs when he fanned 333 while winning his 33 games. In 1917, when his spitter

## Ring Out for Valuable Man Trophy



JIMMY RING, the great Philly pitcher, won 18 and lost 16 games last season, undaunted by his weak supporting cast. He signed this season without a quibble and reported early and in fine shape at the Philly camp in Leesburg. He is out for the record as the most valuable man in his league.

was working at its best, Paul Musser, then with Des Moines, fooled 337 batters, a mark that likely will stand indefinitely.

Another surprise of the last year was establishing of new fielding records by Glenn McNally of Oklahoma City and Dudley Lee of Tulsa. According to the experts, the lively ball has made efficient fielding an impossibility, yet McNally's percentage of .977 for 147 games is the highest mark ever attained by any Western league second baseman participating in as many as 100 games. Likewise, the percentage of .959 hung up by Lee is two percentage points better than any other Western league shortstop.

Nor are these high percentages the result of shrinking or fear of making errors. McNally and Lee both were noted for tackling everything

they possibly could get their hands on.

A third noteworthy fielding record was made in the Western last year when Tex Crosby, the veteran Tulsa backstop, turned in a mark of .959 for his 160 games, the best catching record in the history of the circuit.

Counting both "positive" and "negative" records, Sioux City, the city which has just kicked out for the third, and probably last time, heads the list with 10.

Included in these, though, are such "negative" records as Tesar's yielding the greatest number of runs and hits ever made off a Western league pitcher and Alderman's hitting 37 batters for a record in 1910.

Tulsa, Denver, Omaha and Wichita, rank in the order named as record holders among the teams now in the circuit.

## Paddock to Start Training for Olympic Games

Famous Sprinter in Three Months Will Be Ready to Take on All Comers.

New York, March 1.—Charles Paddock, the California sprinter, against whom serious charges of insubordination were made, has been exonerated by the A. A. U. While Paddock's defense of himself, as made to President Prout, has not been made public, it is said to be a blanket denial of the many things derogatory to the A. A. U. which were supposed to have come from the runner. Paddock is said to have admitted that many of the slanderous stories were told in his presence. He did not tell them, but they came out in print credited to him. Many of them were magnified, at that.

Paddock's heart is set on going to Paris as a representative of this country in the all important sprints, and it would not be fair to him or to the athletic interests of the United States to send a team without him. He holds records for the 100 yards, the 220 yards, the 100 meters, 200 meters, 300 meters and intermediate distances. He made six records in one day in April, 1921. His last active competition was in Paris last May, but since then he has had several practice tests which have convinced him that he can run without effort and in good condition.

Beginning with today, when he expects to be back home on the Pacific coast, Paddock will undergo a strict course of training. In three months, he says, he will be as good as ever. He will compete several times, including the western tryouts, and by June will be ready to take a shot at any and all rivals.

## Joie Ray May Show Well in Mile Run

New York, March 1.—Herbert Reed, a good authority on all kinds of sports, is of the opinion that the chances of this country at the Olympics, especially in the long-distance events, are not very promising. There will be strong pressure to use some one other than Ray in the 1,500 meters, with the idea that he will be stronger this time beyond that distance. It depends a great deal, however, how he intends to run his race, and if he again succumbs to the temptation to turn in a remarkable mile and then go ahead on his experience, reputation and stamina, he will hardly do. Probably Joie can turn in a great mile at Paris, but it is doubtful if he can do as well in anything else. However, that feeling may be upset by the work done in the outdoor season.

Bob Butler, a member of the Washington university of Seattle second eight for four years because of being too light to displace the huskies in the combination has been made assistant to "Rusty" Callow. The latter is endeavoring to select a variety to retain the championship against California on April 19 and also successfully defend the intercollegiate crown at Poughkeepsie June 17 in the three-mile grind.

## Golf "Pros" to Shorten Swing

New York, March 1.—Leading golf professionals are shortening their driving swing, striving for better direction even at the expense of distance, says William Abbott, an expert. Walter Hagen, Jim Barnes and Jock Hutchison are leaders of the new idea that is certain to spread among professionals and amateurs this season. It is a popular fallacy of the links that Hagen and Barnes are terrific drivers. There are numerous pros who can outswat both the former national champions. Hagen and Barnes have so restricted their swing that most of the time the driver is carried back for only a three-quarter stroke. Hutchison hasn't shortened his swing to this extent, but the former British titleholder is steadily reducing the arc of his swing from the tee.

## Marston to Compete in National Open

New York, March 1.—Max Marston, national amateur golf champion, has decided to compete in the national open championship this year. The schedule which Marston has set for himself will include 26 days of actual tournament play.

A boxing fan points out American referees have a hard job separating opponents in bouts. In England the referee does not enter the ring at all and controls the fighters from a raised seat outside the ropes. But they enforce the rules in England.

## Starter Cassidy Tells of Starting Exterminator at Tijuana Race Course

By MARSHAL CASSIDY (Starter at Tijuana Racetrack.)

LAJUANA, Mex., March 1.—Exterminator! What a mighty horse he is. I have just had the pleasure of starting Exterminator at Tijuana. This champion distance gelding of America is a mighty horse more than in name.

At this writing Exterminator, a quite promising candidate for the \$40,000 Cof-froth handicap to be decided at Tijuana, March 20, has won the grand total of \$248,946. Thus he is only \$519 short of the total purse and stake winnings of Man 'O War when he was retired.

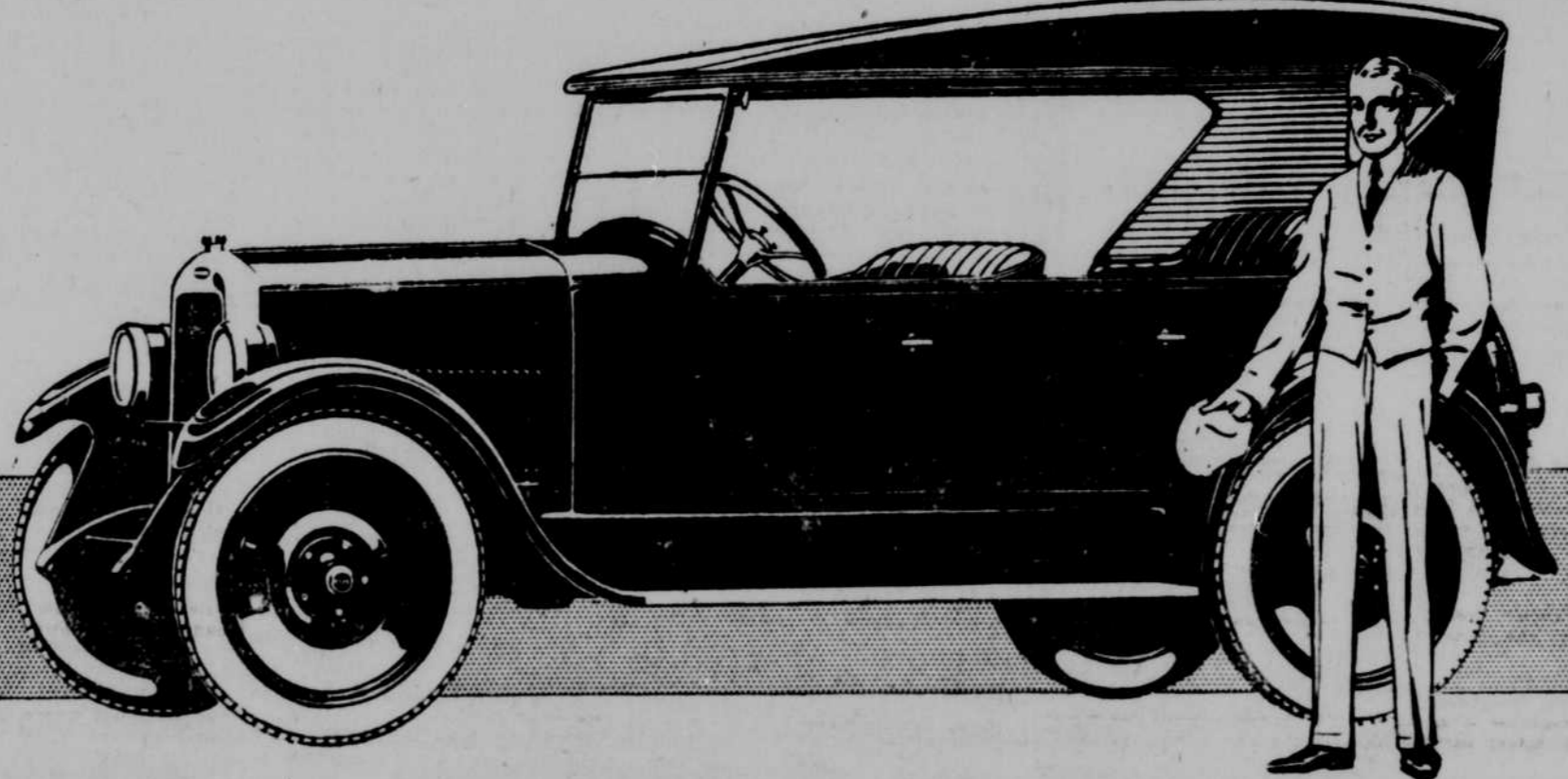
Quite a pleasure it was to have the honor of starting such a champion. It was in a race at one mile and 70 yards and Exterminator came to my hands as the most gentle of horses. What a relief to have such a good horse for it must be remembered that thorough-breds, the greater the name, usually have the more temperament.

Exterminator was "warmed up" through the stretch just previous to the race. Like a lordly king surveying his subjects, "Old Bones" as he is affectionately called, turned his stately head to the grandstand. Then a crowd of 20,000 fans cheered as one. The horse appeared to prance in delight. In the parlance of the

turf, Exterminator was "on his toes." The field of five came to my starting gate in due time. I had no worry with him. He stood at the gate like a champion. He appeared to have an understanding that was almost uncanny. It was nothing short of human intelligence. One of the horses in the field is a "bad actor." He kicks at the post Exterminator appeared to sense this. He moved from danger meantime rubbing his nose against the webbing to signify that he was ready.

In what many consider to be a pleasing start, I sent the field away. I watched the race and had the satisfaction of seeing this champion come from behind and win as is his wont. Horses may come and go, there will be runners to top the \$248,946 which Exterminator has won, but if I remain a starter for the rest of my days, I know the greatest thrill I ever had came when I sent Exterminator away for the first time in winter racing.

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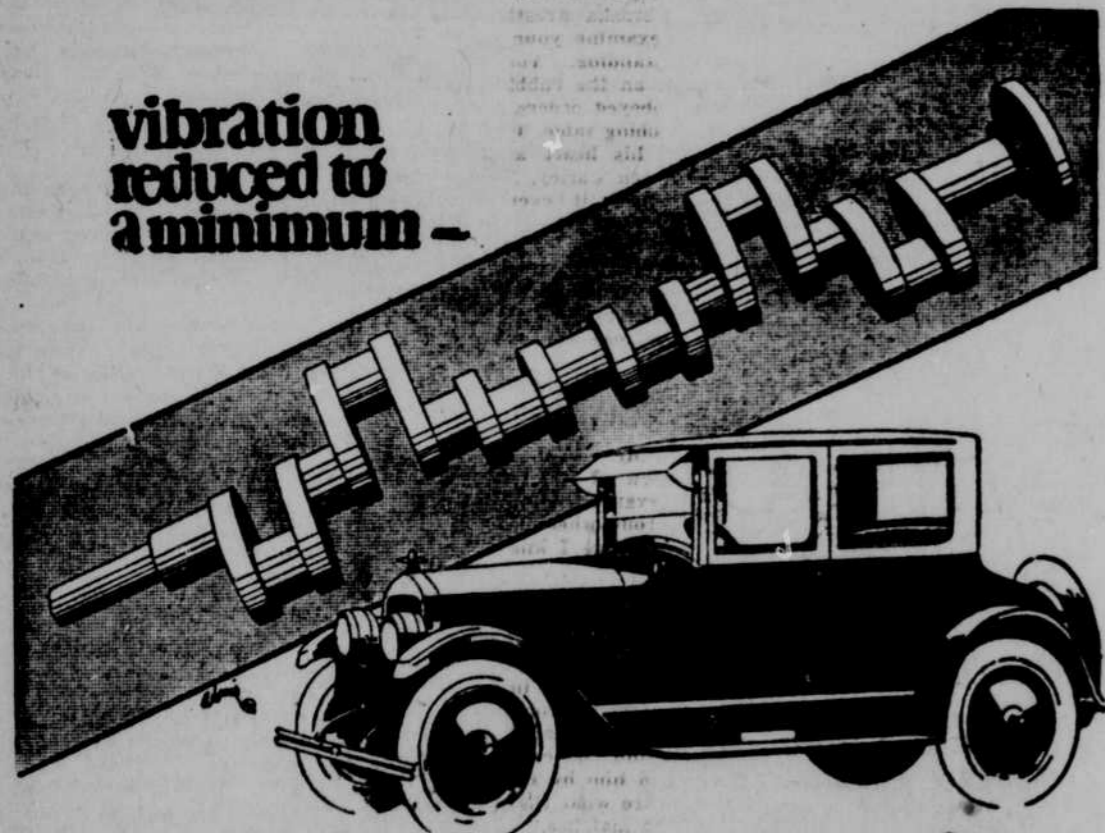
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