

FIRST WEEK AUGURS WELL

Opening of Western League Accomplished Under Favorable Auspices

ATTENDANCE SATISFACTORY ELSEWHERE

Terms Race Along Neck-and-Neck and the Chase for the Pennant Promises to Be Close and Exciting—Season Opens Here Friday.

The first week of the Western league season has been a satisfactory one. Satisfaction in the promoters of the organization because the attendance has been good and indicative of an enthusiasm that will result in a liberal patronage the season through and satisfactory to the fan because of the splendid quality of ball being played by all of the teams. A conclusion warranted by the showing made by the several teams during the first week is that the race for the pennant is going to be a close one. The teams are so well matched that the chase for the flag promises to be an exciting one all the way through.

At the close of the first series of games, where the eastern teams met the west and the northern the south, six of them were tied for second place, with a percentage of 50.7, each having three wins and three losses. The only team that was not chafed up to the credit, Kansas City, with seven games played, led off with a percentage of 57.1, having won four out of the seven. St. Paul brought up the rear with a showing of seven games played and three wins. The standing promises conclusively that the teams are evenly matched and, unless something unforeseen happens or some club has a run of exceptionally hard luck, the indications are that the pennant-winning team will be a matter of speculation until the very end of the season.

Omaha fans are satisfied with the showing the local team has made on its week's trip. Pop Rourke is already having his share of ill luck, but it is better to have it now than later in the season. Handicapped by the absence of an old hand for backstop duty the locals have won three out of six games played in the week.

In the second game with Denver Eddie Lauzon had his hand badly injured and will not be able to play for at least a month. His absence from the team cut a big hole in it and all probability, if he had been able to play, the entire series would have been won from Billy Hulens' "Little Willie." Glade was the only man available for backstop work when Lauzon was laid up and the little fellow has been doing his best. But Phil hasn't had the experience necessary to play the position for the entire responsibility of the catcher's position. Then, too, Glade had his thumb dislocated in the first game with Colorado Springs and Manager Rourke writes that it was only by reason of the youngster's pluck that he wasn't deprived entirely of the services of a catcher.

The importance of having an experienced backstop either in the game or on the bench available for service in case he is needed is appreciated by everyone familiar with base ball. It is not enough for a catcher to stand behind the bat and stop the balls. He must have his mind working every instant of the play. A young pitcher in the hands of a capable backstop must play different ball altogether than when he is caught by an inexperienced player. It is not at all unreasonable to assert that everyone of the games played in Colorado Springs would have been won by Omaha if it hadn't been for the accident which befell Lauzon and put him out of the game.

Dick Buckley's arrival from Chicago was most timely. The old American leaener reached here the first of the week. He didn't expect to don a uniform for a week or two, but as soon as Lauzon was hurt Manager Rourke telegraphed for Buckley to get in as good condition as possible and join the team at St. Joe. With Buckley in the game the Omaha team will be considerably and the Rourke family will be neck-and-neck with the other Western League aggregations, with the prospects favorable for coming out a few lengths ahead during the early stages of the struggle.

The coming of Friday next is being awaited with a great deal of anxiety by the fans of this city. That day will witness the inaugural of the Western league season of 1901 here and it will be a gala occasion. No matter what the outcome of the games in St. Joe and Kansas City may be a warm welcome awaits the arrival of the Rourkeites. The fans here are confident that the team is a good one and have faith in Manager Rourke's ability to give them satisfactory base ball.

The opening game will be with St. Joseph, and from then until July 14 all but twelve of the fifty-four games scheduled will be played on the home grounds. First there will be a stretch of eleven games, during which St. Joe, Kansas City, Denver and Colorado Springs will be seen at the Vinton street reservation. Then the Rourke family will jump to Des Moines for three games, two on Decoration day and one the day following. In the nine succeeding games, beginning June 1, the remaining three teams belonging to the league—Des Moines, Minneapolis and St. Paul, will make their debut to Omaha audiences. June 12 the locals will pay their first visit to the northern cities, playing three games each with Minneapolis and St. Paul, returning here for sixteen games commencing June 19. At the conclusion of this long series the locals will make a flying trip to Des Moines and play three

games and return to meet Minneapolis and St. Paul on the home grounds for three games each, which will bring the season up to July 14. Then the Rourke family will be away for thirty-nine games, with an intermission of six games—August 6 to 11—which will be played on the home grounds with St. Paul and Minneapolis. The locals will return September 3 and finish the season on the home grounds.

Elaborate preparations are being made for the opening day. It will be a memorable event. The afternoon will witness the height of base ball's popularity in this city, and the great national game will be played for a brief space of time. There will be no other exercises. One of the features will be a parade. Carriages will be occupied by the city and county officials, representatives of the press and some of the most prominent base ball enthusiasts of the city. The Eagles, of which the president of the league is a member, will also be largely represented in the parade. There will be plenty of music of the circus order and the glee of the small boy when Barnum comes to town will have a counterpart in the joy of his elder brother and his father when the band starts to play and leads off toward the ball park on Vinton street.

Mayor Moores will be the first pitcher Omaha will try out in the box. He will pitch the first ball over the plate and make a short address, welcoming the return of the base ball season and bespeaking for the Omaha team the hearty support of Omaha enthusiasts as long as their conduct and playing deserves commendation and support. There will be some other exercises, the nature of which has not yet been set forth, and then the battle will be on in earnest.

In the big league the past week has not been marked by any unusual occurrence. The race for supremacy between the American and National organizations is being watched with interest. In Chicago, Philadelphia and Boston the American is getting the better of its more venerable rival in the matter of attendance, but the National is putting up slightly the better article of ball. It becomes more and more apparent every day that the conflict is unwise and unnecessary, and it is to be hoped that the rivalry of the two organizations which are sure to be learned during the present year.

SEEK TO REVIVE PUGILISM

Effort Being Made to Start Fighting Game in Chicago Again—New Blood at Head of Movement.

Followers of pugilism residing in Chicago believe that they have been deprived of pugilistic shows quite long enough. They are seeking to revive the sport in the Lake City and promise Mayor Harrison and the members of the city council to be good if they are given the opportunity of reconstituting the game.

Mayor Harrison was presented with a formal request last week, asking for a permit to give a boxing show. The men who are at the head of the movement looking toward a revival of the sport in Chicago are Thomas Hanton, president, and P. J. Carroll, manager, of the newly organized Illinois Athletic club. Neither of these men, it is said, was in any way connected with the questionable fights which were given in Chicago during the close of last year. They represent an element that believes in legitimate pugilism.

President Hanton asserts that if the mayor of Chicago grants the permit which his club seeks the public will be kept informed of all its doings. The draw-if-both-men-are-on-their-feet basis of arranging matches will be frowned down and any and all fighters who attempt to work such a game will be blacklisted from the club. All stalling, pushing and other arrangements of a like nature will be done away with and at the least shadow of anything wrong with a bout the men will be ordered off the stage and their money forfeited.

There has been no public boxing in Chicago since December 13. The last meeting of the fighters was that between McGovern and Gana, and soon after that the city council passed a resolution condemning the fights as then conducted. That put an end to the public boxing in Chicago, and has been and is now such a great popular demand for the glove contests that it is likely the mayor will give the matter careful consideration. He is a great lover of boxing himself and time and again has expressed himself as being in favor of it as long as it is conducted honestly and in a manly free of scandal.

"Kid" Carter defeated Jack Bonner at Louisville, Monday night. The fight went for twenty rounds and the Brooklyn man was awarded the decision on points. Both men entered the ring in prime condition and put up a mill that was worth going to see. From start to finish the contest was a lively one. Carter was the aggressor, but up until the thirteenth round the bout was an even one. After that the Brooklyn "kid" got in his fine work and his splendid in-fighting began to tell on Bonner. Jack waded through the remaining seven rounds, but it was only by the exercise of an indomitable will that he remained to the finish.

At the outset Carter began work on Bonner's chin and face and early in the fray drove Bonner back against the ropes. Bonner's left eye was almost closed in the fifth round. Bonner landed heavy right and left jabs to the wind, but throughout he seemed minus his well known force. Fully a dozen times his terrific right swings failed to find the "kid," who side-stepped and played for the injured eye or chopped down on the left side of his neck. The Brooklyn youngster's in-fighting and ability to out-point on the kid's own began to tell on Bonner and in the fourth round he was barely able to stand. However, like a bulldog, he fought on, swinging

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where the fight could take place. This obstacle seems to have been removed. In San Francisco the fighting game is at its zenith and the San Francisco Athletic club claims to have a permit to bring off a fight between the big fellows July 3 or 4. So it's up to the fighters to show whether they are really man to get together or if they are flinching under the pugilistic mastery of man's mastication.

announced their willingness to guarantee the fighters a pretty sum if they will agree to appear before their club. "I think we can get Jeffries and Rubin together," said Alce Groggins, one of the men behind the club. "We would prefer to arrange a match between Jeffries and Fitzsimmons and it is almost a certainty that one of the matches will go through. If we fail in both, however, there are other matches that can be arranged. Ed Homan is now in New York trying to arrange terms. If he fails to do any business I think a match will be arranged between Jack Moffat and possibly Jack Root of Chicago or some other equally good middleweight. This would make one of the best

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